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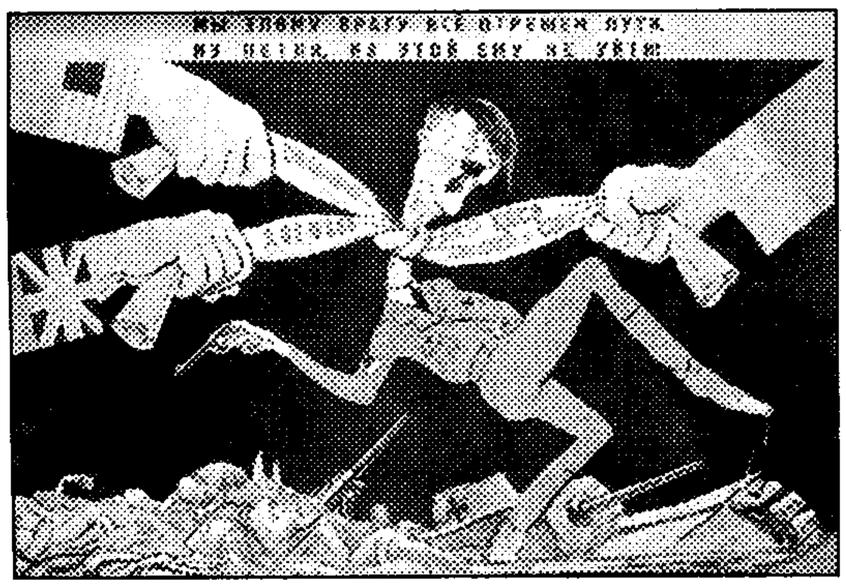

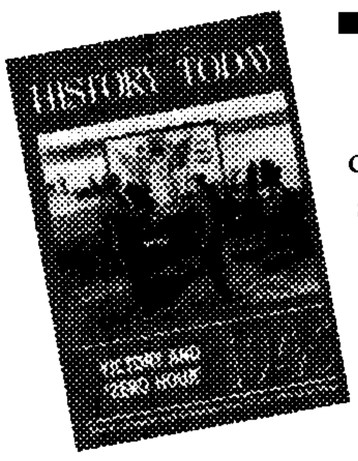

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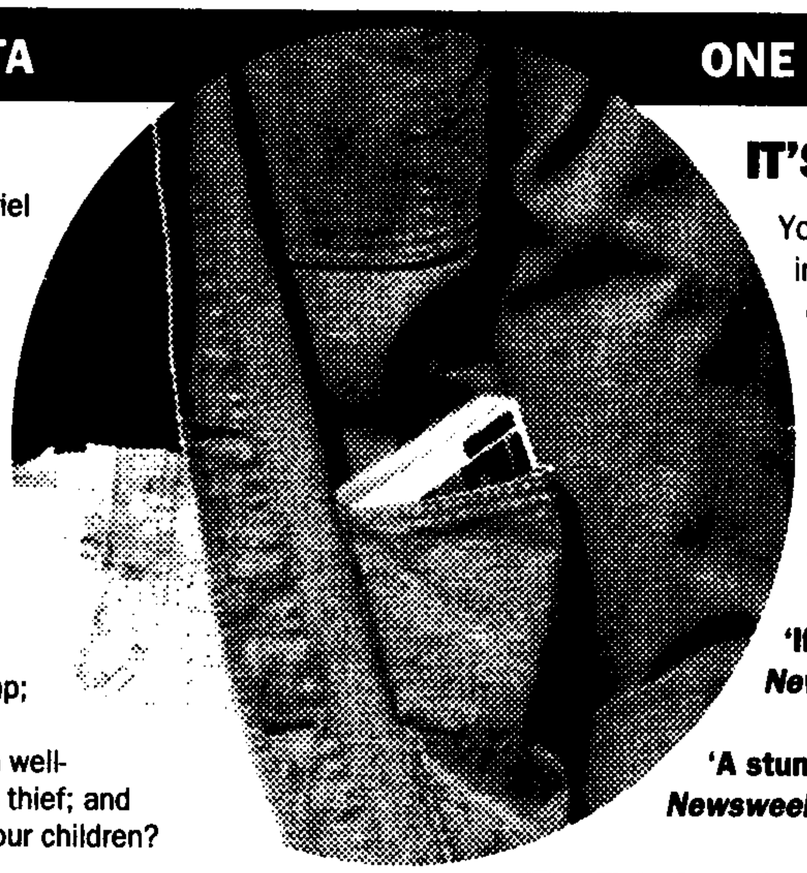

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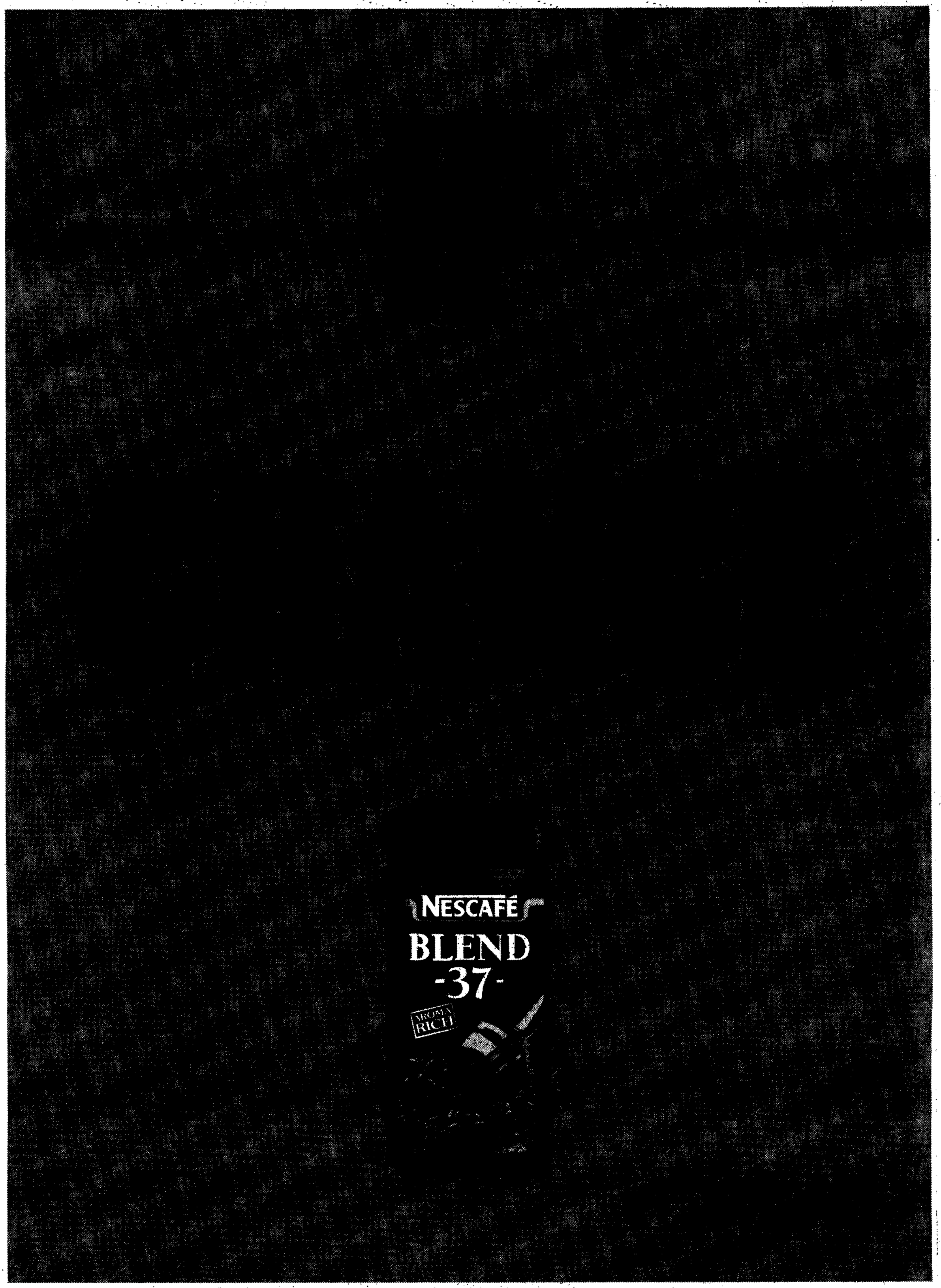
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Gnome

IN THE light of recent events, I wish it to be known that the priceless Gnome Archive may well disappear to America unless the Government steps in to save it for the nation.

The easiest way to do this would be for the National Lottery to pay the Gnome Family Heritage Trust the sum of, say, £13 million every week.

Amongst the 14 items of priceless personal memorabilia which the nation will get in perpetuity are the following:

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- **An intimate letter from a Miss Rita Chevrolet, dated November 1955, demanding that unless the sum of £2,000 a week be paid into her Swiss bank account she would "tell the man from the *Sunday Dispatch* about 'you know what' in Deauville".**
- **The draft of Lord Gnome's historic speech to the reps' dinner at the Ramada Hotel, Coventry, in June 1965, announcing the need for mass-rationalisation of the Gnome washing-machines-to-package-holiday empire.**
- **1 copy of the *Daily Telegraph*, dated 12 October 1974, with crossword half-completed in Lord Gnome's own handwriting, and marked "RAC Club, Pall Mall. Do Not Remove".**
- **Er...**
- **That's it.**

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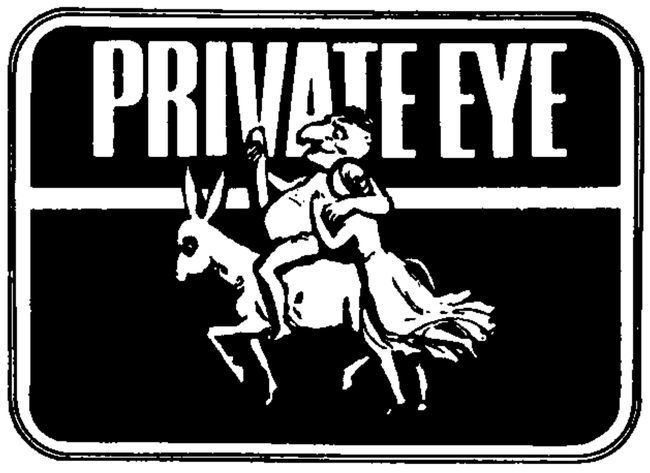


COLOUR SECTION

"THE AWFUL possibility that the greatest insurance market in the world is insolvent and should not be trading has been haunting the City for several months."

This sentence, which has appeared in many guises throughout press and television in recent weeks, appeared first in the *Eye* three months ago on 27 January. The *Eye* also announced the formation of a special cabinet sub-committee to look into the consequences of Lloyd's insolvency (a committee whose meetings are growing ever more anxious); and published the text of a letter from John Finlay, chairman of the Names Defence Association, setting out the extent to which Lloyd's of London has issued "false and misleading accounts" to cover up the insurance market's debts.

The driving force in the cabinet committee, needless to say, is Michael "Tarzan" Heseltine, whose usual gung-ho qualities in such matters ("Let it go bust," was his reaction to the news that thousands of jobs were to be lost at Leyland DAF two years ago) are tempered by uncharacteristic caution over Lloyd's.

Letting Lloyd's go bust might cause all sorts of problems for Mr Heseltine's friends and financiers in the City.

● On the other hand most of the beleaguered "names" threatened with bankruptcy by huge demands from Lloyd's are hoping for early bankruptcy. They calculate that the chief creditors of Lloyd's — the US government — will take years to sue them individually for what they owe.

One famous former Lloyd's name who may be thinking along these lines is Winston S. Churchill, the Tory MP for Davyhulme. The key to the dirty deal whereby he and his family plan to pocket £12 million from the sale of his father's papers is the MP's dreadful debts to Lloyd's which are likely to be much higher than he imagines.

Churchill joined Lloyd's in 1972 and for 16 years or so made the fat profits all Lloyd's names regard as their natural right. In 1988, however, things began to go wrong. Churchill was heavily involved in the "bummer" syndicates, starting in 1988 with Merrett (which is expected to cost him £120,000 more than the £35,622 he has already paid.)

Stephen Merrett, the mastermind of that syndicate, was deputy chairman of Lloyd's, and Churchill was always attracted by the syndicates run by the Lloyd's big boys — such as Jansen Green, which is expected to cost him another £78,000. Jansen Green was run by a former chairman of Lloyd's, Sir Peter Green; and a more recent chairman, David Coleridge, was a mastermind of the Skey syndicate in which Churchill was heavily involved in 1990 (at an expected cost to him of £60,000).

Add the expected deterioration of all the Churchill syndicates together and the total bill comes to £600,717 — the sort of sum which would send any normal MP (especially if he is about to engage in an expensive divorce) flying to his father's papers.

THE most remarkable feature of the rise and rise in the Tory hierarchy of Dr Clive Froggatt was that he was knocked off the official list of Tory candidates.

The careful men and women who vet the list had him checked out. They were rather shocked to learn from their investigators of Dr Froggatt's frequent fun-loving visits to Morocco with his close friend, the former Tory MP for Cheltenham, Charles Irving.

One senior Tory told the *Eye*: "The association [which draws up the candidates' list] are quite prepared to accommodate a gay person if he or she lives a respectable life. But going to Morocco frequently is beyond the pale." Deprived of the normal route to political influence, the junkie doctor made a base out of the Conservative Medical Association, from which he launched himself into Downing Street and charmed Mrs Thatcher by attacking the medical establishment for its sentimental affection for the national health service.

Doctors and elected politicians, he insisted to her delight, must be cleared out of the control of health care and replaced by Tory nominees whom he would help select. The more fired up he was on amphetamines and other drugs, the more Thatch was impressed with him.

Three secretaries of state — Kenneth Clarke, William Waldegrave and Virginia Bottomley — all continued to treat the awful Froggatt as a privileged special adviser without ever realising (or even checking) that he had been removed from the official candidates' list.

Only when he was finally charged with stealing about half a million pounds from the NHS he was so determinedly "reforming" did they make it clear they did not want to see him again.

HARK at Helen Liddell, the talkative Labour MP for Monklands East, initiating a Commons debate on 5 April on the costs of privatisation.

"Those of us who have been involved in private sector flotations know the substantial fees that are totted up by City advisers," she announced. And just how would the Labour MP for Monklands East who spent most of her adult life as a Labour party official have become involved in a private sector flotation?

Answer: Mrs Liddell was a director of Mirror Group newspapers when it was floated on the stock exchange in 1990 to the enormous benefit of its fat proprietor, R. Maxwell. A few months later, Maxwell went overboard off the Canary islands after stealing not just £700 million from the *Mirror* pension fund but at least £100 million of company profits.

Quite how the directors of MGN managed to lose so much money in so short a time has been the subject of a department of trade inspectors' inquiry. The inspectors' report was finished long ago, but cannot be published or acted on until the case is heard against the Maxwell brothers. Directors of MGN in those heady flotation days are praying that the legal delay will be drawn out as long as possible. They include Sir Robert Clark, current chairman of MGN, Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, currently managing director, Joe Haines, the celebrated columnist — and one Helen Liddell.

Street of Shame

LORD WAKEHAM, still shocked by his failure to foist the brutish "Sir" Bernard Ingham on to the press complaints commission (PCC), still manages to "bat for the government".

The commission recently dismissed a complaint against an article in the *Daily Telegraph* by the chief scientific adviser to the ministry of agriculture, Peter Bunyan, who had attacked opponents of the government's line on mad cow disease.

Bunyan singled out Somerset dairy farmer Mark Purdey, a well-known anti-pesticide campaigner, and when the *Telegraph* refused to publish Purdey's reply, he resorted to the PCC. Purdey claimed that the two main planks of the MAFF chief scientist's argument were wrong: a claim that organophosphorus compounds (OPCs) had never been used in Guernsey; and Bunyan's claim that Purdey's remedy, a cocktail of drugs, "may have caused a remission of clinical signs of BSE lasting no more than a few hours but the animals subsequently diagnosed as having BSE then had to be destroyed on welfare grounds".

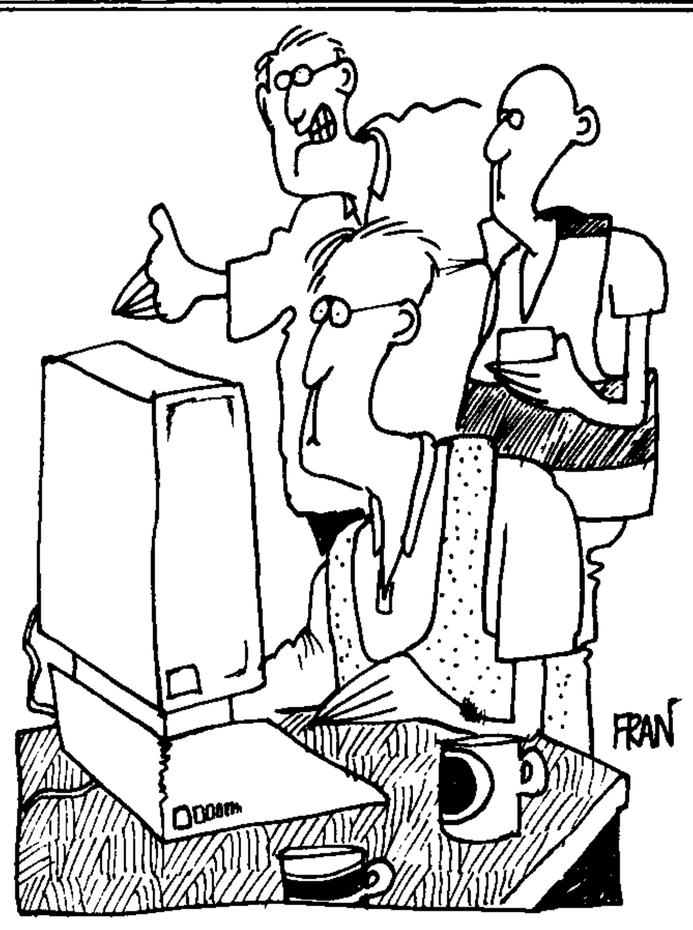
Purdey sent the PCC copies of MAFF reports which clearly show that: OPCs have been used on Guernsey; and that MAFF twice imposed notices on his farm under the Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy Order, both of which were withdrawn over a month later.

Mr Purdey's main complaint was of inaccuracy. But the PCC threw up its hands, bleating: "The commission was unable to become involved in the complexities of an issue over which experts could not agree."

AS WE prepare for the VE Day celebrations, patriotic *Daily Telegraph* editor Max "Hitler" Hastings has been doing his bit for Anglo-German reconciliation by striking up a friendship with an attractive German divorcee.

Alas, it seems "Hitler" and his Rhinemaiden may have over-exerted themselves: he has slipped a disc and is obliged to take editorial conferences lying flat on his back in the middle of the office floor.

Are *Telegraph* hacks offering their condolences? Far from it: they are delighted. The painkillers Max is gulping down to ease the agony have had a remarkable effect on his temperament. Instead of barking out orders and dishing out bollockings in his customary fashion, he is now said to be in a state of "benign serenity".



"Hey, wow! Trevor's found a way to trainspot on the Internet..."

Private I-I-I

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

		Ego Rating
1	Michael Frayn (Guardian 26/4)	2.14
2	Patrick Marber (Daily Telegraph 29/4)	2.05
3	Jonathan Woss (Sunday Times 30/4)	1.76
4	Bernard Levin (Times 28/4)	1.60
5	Zoe Heller (ST 30/4)	1.47
6	Francis Wheen (Observer 16/4)	1.30
7	Justine Picardie (IoS 30/4	1.22
8	Joan Smith (Guardian 22/4)	1.11
9	Lord Tonypandy (Mail 27/4)	1.06
10	Jack Straw MP (Ind 29/4)	1.05

Bubblin' under: Dominic Lawson, Michael Winner, Barbara Toner, Laura Thompson.

FOREIGN newsdesks which can't spare hacks for Rwanda have had limitless, it seems, to report on the French presidential elections.

Unfortunately, the invasion of France by the diplomatic press corps has not helped the readers that much. Here are the *pisspauvre* predictions of Fleet Street's finest before the first ballot:

"Jacques Chirac seems certain to come top of the poll next Sunday," Suzanne Lowry, *Daily Telegraph*, 15 April.

"Gaullist Jacques Chirac remains the clear leader," Jonathan Fenby, *Independent*, 21 April.

"Jacques Chirac is a certainty to win Sunday's first round of the election," Nicholas Assinder, *Daily Express*, 21 April.

"Chirac is favourite to come out top in the first round of the French presidential election tomorrow," Jonathan Steele, *Guardian*, 22 April.

"Jacques Chirac is in the lead; Balladur and Jospin are running it close for the other place in the second round," Mary Dejevsky, *Independent*, 22 April.

"Attention is focused on the battle for second place between Balladur and Jospin," Charles Bremner, *Times*, 22 April.

Then on 23 April, *bouleversez-moi avec une plume*, the socialist Lionel Jospin comes top of the first round poll!

THE National Union of Journalists (NUJ) has been running national newspaper advertisements to coincide with the *Daily Mirror*'s "Rolling Rose" love-in with the Labour party.

The ads recall that the great people's organ under David "Rommel" Montgomery is so pro-Labour it refuses to recognise the NUJ or even to let its general-secretary John Foster on to *Mirror* premises.

Even more upset than *Mirror* bosses is Labour's deputy leader, who is said to be beside himself at the NUJ treachery. But why should a former Cunard steward take this so personally? Perhaps because first prize in the *Mirror*'s Rolling Rose contest is tea with the people's choice — John Prescott.

THERE have been ructions at the *Evening Standard*, where the feud between Londoner's Diary editor Marcus Scriven and his flamboyant deputy, former *Eye* hack Christopher "the Spiv" Silvester, has reached crisis point.

Last autumn Scriven, a former Welsh Guards captain, suspended Silvester for a week for insubordination, the week to be deducted from holiday entitlement. The editor of the paper, Stewart Steven, brokered a peace and revoked the sentence on Silvester, who thereby received an *extra* week's holiday. An uneasy peace reigned for several months, but Scriven never overcame the humiliation of failing to obtain the head of Silvester.

Recently Scriven returned from a fortnight's holiday in Jamaica and came into the office on a Saturday to plough through copies of the pages that had appeared in his absence. He then drew up a long memo (estimates vary between 2,000 and 4,000 words) which moaned about Silvester's stewardship in his absence, during which references to public schools and obscure toffs had noticeably diminished.

However, this had the unintended consequence of provoking Steven to sack both of them.

Londoner's Diary hacks, eight or so in number, will no doubt miss the delights of the Scriven-Silvester feud — particularly Silvester's impressive expenses claims and Scriven's stilted conversations about public school life, Oxford and the army (his favourite books are *Decline and Fall* and *Bravo Two Zero*).

A MOST promising feud has broken out between Paul Halloran, co-editor of a dreary new book about Mark Thatcher, and American business hack Peter Koenig, who himself once had hopes of writing such a book.

In the current issue of *GQ* magazine, Koenig writes disapprovingly of Halloran's connections with gun-runners and former CIA agents. Halloran is retaliating in the next issue of *GQ*'s rival, *Esquire*, with a full-frontal assault on "the gormless Koenig".

As the war of words becomes ever more vicious, Halloran may be none too pleased to learn that his friend Mark Hollingsworth, with whom he wrote the Thatcher book, is apparently consorting with the enemy. According to records at Companies House, Hollingsworth is one of the directors of Blade Productions, a firm which was set up last year. His fellow directors include *Indie* hack Tim Kelsey and... Peter Koenig.

BARRIE Penrose, the veteran investigative hack whose triumphs include his discovery of "Hitler's bones" in a back garden in Holland, has found a new role in life after being shown the back door by *Sunday Express* editor Brian "Mussolini" Hitchen.

Penrose is deep in the bowels of Wapping working for *Sunday Times* lawyer Alastair "Blubber" Brett as he tries to stand up the "Michael Foot was a KGB agent" story in preparation for the forthcoming libel case.

The author of the Foot "scoop" was of course David Leppard — a man with whom Penrose has not hitherto enjoyed the most cordial relations. Still, Penrose has plenty of experience of libel: he once sued the former *ST* editor Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, and he cost his employers at the *Express* many thousands of pounds in damages and costs with his Jackanory-style reporting. Hence his hasty departure from Lord Stevens's fiefdom.

HOW THEY ARE RELATED I

THE *Sunday Telegraph* is employing a gorgeous pouting twentysomething hackette by the name of Natasha Garnett to write its Mandrake column.

Ms Garnett has never worked on a newspaper before, but her grandfather is the former attorney-general Lord Rawlinson. It seems Rawlinson wrote to *Torygraph* editor Charles Moore suggesting her as an ideal recruit, and she was instantly put on to the payroll.

By an amazing coincidence, Lord Rawlinson is also a director of the *Telegraph*.

HOW THEY ARE RELATED II

***DAILY Telegraph* columnist Victoria Coren (relation) had a high old time rubbishing Raquel Welch's performance in *The Millionairess* at the Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham.**

"She gets her lines wrong, she waves her hands about as though besieged by flies, and she has no comic timing whatsoever," she observed. When Maureen Lipman complained about the article, la Coren returned to the attack, recalling "that long-established point about not performing in public if you can't take fair criticism".

Can this be the same Victoria Coren who performed a stand-up comedy routine at the Edinburgh festival a couple of years ago — and was deeply upset when audiences and critics alike agreed that she had, er, "no comic timing whatsoever"? Surely not.

HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! FOLLOWING the gutter press's disgraceful treatment of poor Jonathan Aitken, it is a pleasure to turn to happier thoughts.

They concern his sister, the beautiful actress Maria Aitken, who in 1980 starred in a BBC2 comedy-drama series called *Company and Co*, about a nightclub singing trio who double as crime-fighters, usually going undercover to do so.

In one of the most exciting episodes, Maria posed as a high-class madame in order to smash a vice ring procuring young girls for a Middle Eastern potentate. Fortunately, armed with nothing more than the simple sword of truth, she was able to ensure that justice prevailed.

Meanwhile, a begging letter arrives from the chief secretary to the treasury, sent on behalf of St Margaret's, the charming Westminster chapel which is patronized by pious MPs and where Jonathan is the devoted "Rector's Warden".

"St Margaret's has maintained a tradition of making an Easter offering to the rector," Jonathan writes. "We hope you will give generously." Such Christian works must make a refreshing change from selling arms to our Islamic fundamentalist friends!

HALLO! EMBARRASSING scenes for "Sir" Bernard Ingham after he had the temerity, in his newspaper column, to impugn the virtue of Lady Bienvenida Buck.

Shortly afterwards Bernard was dining in a restaurant with his editor, Sir Nick Lloyd, when who should be seated at the next table but la Buck herself. The blonde bombshell came over, ran her fingers through Ingham's hair and purred: "Bernard, you naughty boy. I haven't seen you in such a long time — where *have* you been?"

A flustered Ingham was then observed making long and impassioned protests to his dining companion, insisting he had never met Lady Buck before in his life. What a wicked joke to play on such a distinguished public servant — or was it?

"You can't fool me, Daniel. The budgie's dead, isn't it?"

HALLO! TO PARIS, where Winston "Lottery" Churchill's mother, the fantastically ambitious (*Shurely "able"?*) Pamela Harriman, reveals how poverty-stricken the Churchills really are.

As ingrates whine about the trifling £12.5 million paid to the adulterous Tory MP, Mrs Harriman, the American ambassador to Paris, confides that she has been reduced to auctioning family knickknacks at Christie's in New York for mere coppers.

The Picasso drawing *Mère et Enfant* is expected to raise no more than $10 million, while her Renoir will raise a derisory $7 million and her charming Matisse a heart-rending $4 million. Imagine!

I ask Pamela, woman to woman, about the celebrated — and cruel — remark that "she studied the ceilings of only the richest men".

"It's so unfair," she wails. "What about all the poor ones I've slept with?"

HALLO! *THE Marquesa is moved by the warm parliamentary tributes paid to William Hague, the bumptious 34-year-old minister for the disabled who is so busy at the moment introducing new incapacity benefit to clamp down on scrounging do-littles.*

Aware that "Vague" is tipped to become the youngest cabinet minister for decades, colleagues are asking from which wing of the party he actually hails.

Perhaps the Marquesa can help. She was present on that summer evening in 1981 when young Hague was elected president of the Oxford Union. As his triumph was announced, Vague's exuberant supporters danced gaily on the Union bar singing that stormtroopers' favourite, Tomorrow Belongs To Me. How touching!!

JUST FANCY THAT!

THOSE puzzled by the decision of the heritage lottery fund, headed by Lord Rothschild, to bail out Winston Churchill by purchasing his grandfather's papers, may be interested in Prof Michael Cohen's comments on an earlier, 19th century relationship between the two families.

In his book *Churchill and the Jews*, Cohen states: "[The Churchills] had a close association with the English branch of the Rothschilds, who loaned them money, and pulled strings on their behalf." Relations between these two august families would appear to be as strong as ever.

HALLO! **TO dinner with Sir Donald Wilson at the luxurious Four Seasons hotel near Manchester airport.**

Donald is wearing neither his farming nor his property hat this evening: as chairman of the North West regional health authority he is the guest of honour of 30 executives from the south Manchester health authority.

Over a delicious dinner conversation turns to the latest round of health cuts. Debate is so intense that some guests linger after dinner and stay at the hotel overnight. The menu included only one really indigestible dish: the fact that at the top of the agenda was the decision to save money by moving a children's day admissions unit into a general surgery ward.

HALLO! *NEW socialism is so much more fun than the old variety, don't you think? When Gavin Laird, general secretary of something called the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union, was knighted by Queen Brenda recently, Gavin claims that, like a true Scotsman, he was at the time completely "bare arsed".*

HALLO! FOOLISH stories circulate that Lloyd's is so bankrupt it may have to close. But after a weekend spent in Suffolk with the suave David Rowland, chairman of Lloyd's, the Marquesa has every confidence in the London insurance market's future.

Astutely, David has managed to acquire for himself a rather charming weekend retreat in the county — a magnificent manor house, no less, called Giffords Hall in Wickham Brook.

It is set in several enchanting acres and, appropriately for someone who gambles with other people's money, it is only a few miles from Newmarket!

HALLO! *MY DEAR confidante, the saintly Duchess of York, is showing signs of torment and paranoia.*

She is obsessed with the notion that the frightfully snobbish Sir Simon Cooper, master of the royal household, is out "to get" the Fergusons. She claims the autocratic Sir Simon is behind the blackballing from the Life Guards Association of her father, randy "Major" Ron. And sobbing, she accuses Sir Simon of driving her from her Buckingham Palace office.

Still, there is some comfort for the Duchess of Freebiana even in these dark days of exile: her latest devotee is none other than the fabulously talented and aristocratic Bruce Forsyth! So no longer can La Gloriana be painted as an avaricious vulgarian: Brucie has just flown Fergie and her fat entourage out to Puerto Rico!

HALLO! WE ARE delighted to attend a press conference hosted by Jason Donovan, the former child star and now straight actor. Tabloid lowlifes at the event insist on asking Jason about the evening last summer when he was found unconscious at the Viper Room nightclub in Los Angeles, where River Phoenix died of a drug overdose. We all know, of course, that our antipodean pin-up, who uses lemon juice on his hair to such good effect, merely suffered an asthma attack, for he said so at the time and left hacks in no doubt that any suggestion that it was *not* would result in the swift and litigious embrace of m'learned friends.

Amazingly Jason now tells us: "To say it was asthma at the time was not really true. I enjoy a good party and maybe at the Viper Room I just took things a little too far. My father gave me a good ticking-off after the incident." Whatever can this mean?

Genuine fans like the Marquesa, meanwhile, will be delighted with the much more important news that Jason is to return to musicals as Billy Liar, the boy who can't tell the truth.

'The Marquesa'

IN THE TEAROOM

THERE'S a corner at the Labour end of the tearoom where conversation is as likely to dwell on the merits of Armani or Kenzo as on welfare reform or reducing the trade unions' block vote at party conference.

Here, quips about "designer socialism" prompt an inner glow of secret pride. And after cheering Gordon Brown's repositioning of Labour as the consumer's friend on Monday, the little group who meets here gathered to complain about yet another Tory smear.

It wasn't Hezza's bombast about the party still being in hock to union barons that upset them: it was Phillip Oppenheim, the young Conservative from Amber Valley, who had been put up to be rude about Labour on the live TV coverage of Saturday's vote on Clause 4. He referred sneeringly to Labour MPs dressing like "photo-copier reps".

Things cheered up, however, with the arrival of another MP who had overheard Tories tut-tutting about Oppenheim's performance at the other end of the room. Photo-copier reps, it seems, are just the sort of commission-hungry enterprise-society chaps Mr Major's campaign in Middle England is trying to woo. By blurting out on national TV that "photo-copier rep" is Tory speak for "nerd", Oppenheim might cost the party at least one marginal seat at the election — maybe even his own.

'Urquhart'

ALL MPs were sent letters by the Baby Milk Action Group while a Commons debate raged over a baby milk marketing law. The group wanted to highlight how milk manufacturers are allowed to advertise through the healthcare system.

Most MPs responded with polite letters. However, the MP for Billericay, Teresa Gorman, received two letters on the subject and this obviously irritated the fragile Europhobe.

She replied to the action group on a bumptious postcard, which pictured la Gorman driving a bus. It read: "What a busybody you are! Isn't there anything left that people should make their own minds up about? — Teresa."

The other letter lobbying the Essex girl MP was from one of her own constituents. Ever the politician, Gorman managed to suppress her irritation for a voter and made no mention of her acrimony towards the busybodies. This time the postcard was a sedate head and shoulders shot of the serene Teresa.

She wrote sweetly: "Thank you for writing. I am concerned about the matter raised in your letter and I shall certainly be following it up."

BEFORE the election the Commons seems likely to gain two new Unionist MPs and, depending on the outcome of a police inquiry, possibly a third.

The fearsome Robert McCartney QC has now joined the race to succeed the late Jim Kilfedder as MP for North Down. McCartney is one of the most sought after barristers in Northern Ireland and faces a massive cut in income should he have to commute to Westminster.

The prospect of McCartney sitting as an Independent Unionist gives even Ian Paisley and his deputy Peter Robinson the willies, never mind the Northern Ireland office. But political commentators should beware of recklessly calling Mr McCartney a "Unionist". More than anything else it was irresponsible use of the U-word that led to McCartney's magnificent libel victory over the *Eye* in the Northern Ireland courts in 1990.

McCartney's elevation will probably prove to be the final straw for Ulster Unionist leader Jim Molyneaux. The 74-year-old was planning to step down at the next election, even before being cuckolded by Major, but he is unlikely to last the two years.

This enticing prospect has led to the media rebirth of another wannabe MP, David Burnside, the former British Airways PR man (see *Eyes passim*) who had been keeping a low profile after his selection as token victim to appease Richard Branson. Burnside has taken a break from discreetly massaging press coverage for the Saatchi brothers to make a series of announcements designed to boost Unionist morale. Burnside's old mate David Montgomery can surely be relied to help out with favourable coverage in the local editions of the *Mirror* and the *Indescribablydependent* when Molyneaux's successor is selected.

Meanwhile Northern Ireland's director of public prosecutions may determine if a third Unionist seat becomes available. Last year North Belfast MP Cecil Walker had a chat with a man who had allegedly been approached by loyalist paramilitaries seeking protection money. Walker said he was simply "passing on information to the man that the paramilitaries were asking questions about him".

Unbeknown to the MP "the man" — who is expected to appear as a witness in a forthcoming extortion case — had been wired for sound by the RUC's anti-racketeering squad C1 (3). A tape of their conversation is with the DPP. Walker remains confident that "simply passing on information" is not an offence, but the DPP's view will probably be known in June.

RED FACES at the Cardiff office of Plaid Cymru, the Welsh nationalist party: on the eve of local elections it emerged that the nationalists' organiser in the valleys had applied for a similar post with the Labour party.

The application by Michael Oliver was binned by Labour officials on the ground that switchers could always switch again. Oliver, it transpired, was a Labour card-carrier before he jumped into the nats' leaky boat last year.

GILLIAN Shephard may deny there are rifts between her education department and Downing Street over the provision of nursery vouchers, but she cannot deny rifts within the Conservative party over the issue.

Graham Riddick, the disgraced MP for Colne Valley, was recently appointed a Conservative member of the Commons education select committee. His local paper proudly picked up its MP's comments on education, now that he would have an influential bearing on policy.

Unfortunately the *Huddersfield Examiner* reported that Riddick had praised the voucher system of nursery provision for four-year-olds, saying it would provide "options for parents". Perhaps Riddick had missed the newspaper reports only a day earlier in which the minister of state for education, Eric Forth, gave his policy stance. He highlighted the dangers of a voucher system just as Gillian Shephard, education secretary, had a few days before.

ON THE eve of the local elections an embarrassing row is simmering in Bingley as the Bradford-based company Illingworth Morris tries to have green belt status removed from a plot of land in the ward.

The Tory candidate, Mark Startin, supports Illingworth Morris's opponents in the area. They fear that the company wants to create a foothold from which to build houses on a wider area of protected and picturesque landscape.

Startin said: "I deplore the attempt to intrude on the green belt." But what help can he expect from his local Tory MP, Sir Marcus Fox, who happens to be a resident of Bingley? The wily chairman of the backbench 1922 committee and guardian of traditional values is certainly well aware of Illingworth Morris's plans — as a director of the company, how could he be anything else?

IF defence secretary Malcolm Rifkind wants to save taxpayers' money he could start by making the MoD police redundant.

Their main success seems to be in harassing junior civil servants for stealing paper clips and envelopes.

The case of David Harris, a *Sunday Mirror* hack turned MoD (Navy) press officer based at Devonport, is even more bizarre. He was suspended over a disputed £2.40 expenses claim only to be cleared after an eight-month probe.

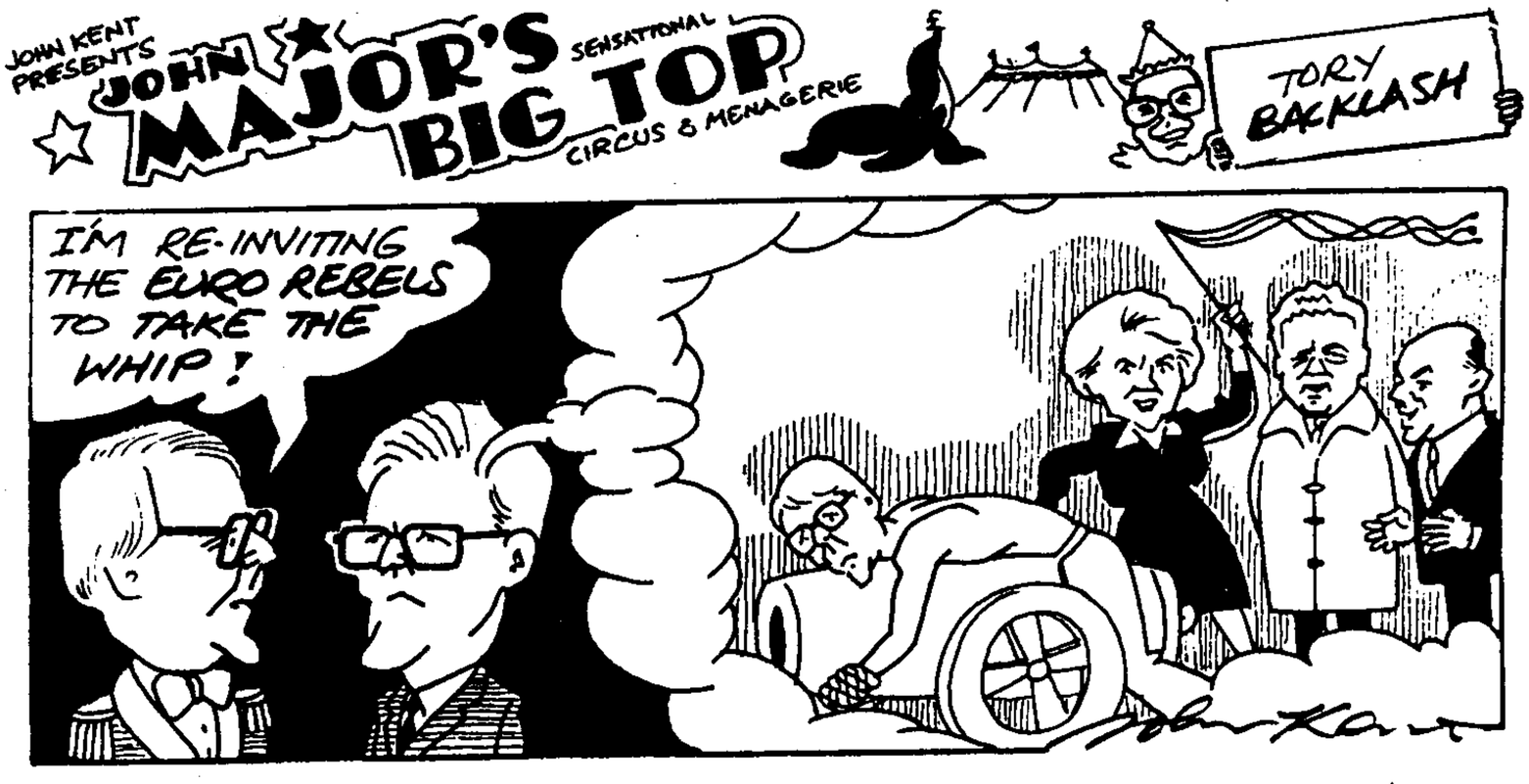
Harris paid for a round of drinks at a Navy club on 20 January 1994 and was suspended on 20 April of that year. On 15 August he suffered the further indignity of having his pay reduced, according to MoD procedure, by 30 per cent. The case was finally dropped when the MoD police agreed that no criminal act had taken place. This cost the taxpayer £80,000 — and more "personal cases" of this nature are in the pipeline.

ANCIENT Bob Parry, MP for Liverpool Riverside, distinguished himself last year as one of the few MPs not to say one word in the House of Commons.

Presumably he must be far too busy with vital constituency work. Er, no actually. While the clause four debate raged in his constituency, which contains some of the once expelled Militant wards, Parry seemed to be taking a back seat. All party members were canvassed for their opinion of the new Blair clause and vociferous arguments ensued. The final count was 79 percent for and 21 percent against the new clause. And which way did old Bob jump? In true Parry style he failed to return his voting slip.

Elmbridge Borough Council Election flyer

'Backbiter'


JOHN KENT PRESENTS
JOHN MAJOR'S SENSATIONAL BIG TOP
CIRCUS & MENAGERIE
TORY BACKLASH
I'M RE-INVITING THE EURO REBELS TO TAKE THE WHIP!

NOOKS and CORNERS

MANY of the architectural hacks of Britain who add so much to the gaiety of nations recently received the following letter from Mr Francis Duffy, retiring president of the Royal Institution of British Architects, on the subject of "copyright":

"I frequently receive complaints from members that they are not always credited when their buildings are illustrated in articles, advertisements etc. Architects have a right to be credited every time a drawing, model or photograph of their building is published, under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988. Section 77 (4) (c) of the act states that the author of a work of architecture in the form of a building, has the right to be identified whenever copies of a graphic work representing it, or a photograph of it, are issued to the public.

"Section 77 (5) also provides that the author of a work of architecture in the form of a building also has the right to be identified on the building as constructed, or where more than one building is constructed to the design, on the first to be constructed. I would be very grateful if you would bear this in mind when writing about architecture."

I quite agree. It would not only be a great boon to architectural historians but benefit us all if buildings were clearly signed — if the names of their perpetrators, sorry, designers, were permanently inscribed on their structures so they can be held up to public admiration, or contempt.

But there is a difficulty here which neither the copyright act nor Mr Duffy seems to address. It is not just that so many masterpieces by British architects ought really to be credited to Le Corbusier or Mies Van Der Rohe or Michael Graves or the many other foreign architects of buildings which have been ripped off. No. The question of authorship can be further complicated by the nature of professional practice.

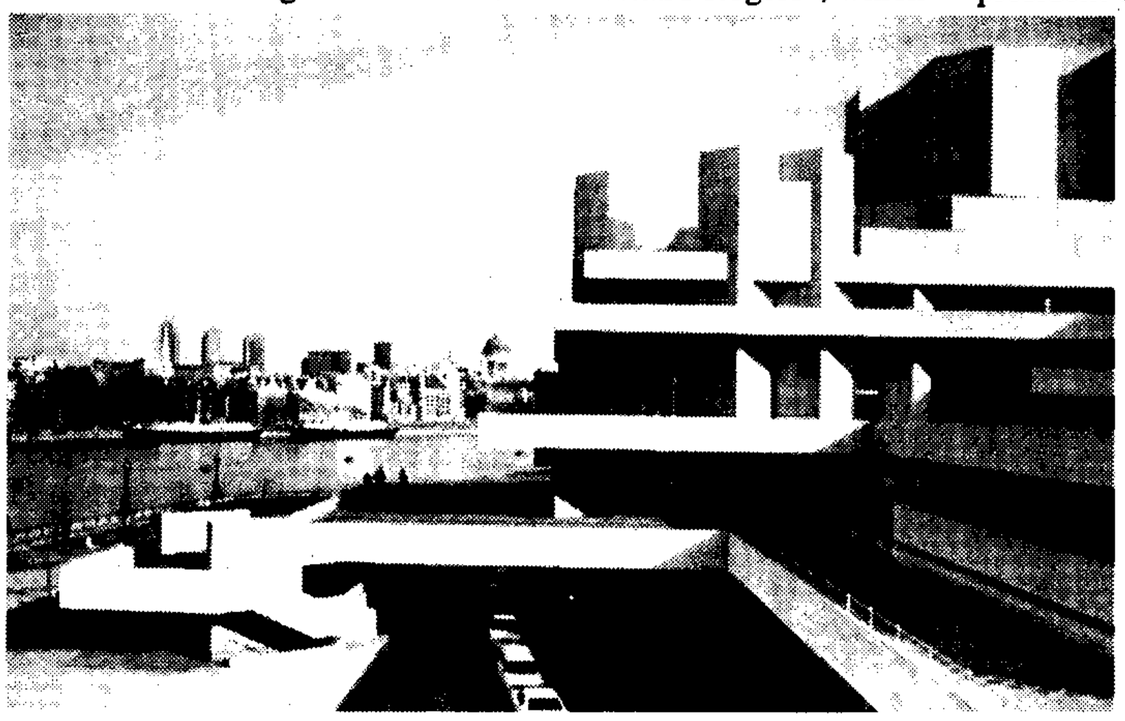
If, say, a photograph of Eros House, Catford, were to be used in an advertisement for lingerie or contraceptives, should it be credited under Section 77 (4) (c) to its "architect", Owen Luder, president-elect of the RIBA, when it was actually designed by Mr Rodney Gordon?

Similarly, would it be right to label Centre Point with the name of the once-ubiquitous Colonel Seifert when it was the work of Mr George Marsh, among others? And what of that collective intelligence known as "Sir Richard Rogers", which gave the world the vapid wisdom of the recent Reith lectures? Should one of the masterpieces of the glamorous demotic knight be labelled with this name when it was actually designed by, for sake of argument, Mr John Young?

You see the problem. And there is another. This column has always believed in naming architects (and, indeed, has sometimes encountered difficulty in establishing the authorship of such things as coffee lounge extensions to churches). My picture today shows the National Theatre and I have no hesitation whatever in crediting it to Sir Denys Lasdun. But, if that ever-so-sensitive pair of shop designers, Messrs Stanton Williams, manages to satisfy the South Bank board and succeeds in ripping a chunk off the building (*Eye* 850), would this credit still be accurate?

Similarly, since these boyish geniuses have also turned their attention to the Ashmolean museum in Oxford (see *Eyes passim*), should not a photograph of the resulting improved and scrubbed cultural emporium bear the credit "designed by Professor Charles Robert Cockerell and buggered up by Alan Stanton and Paul Williams"?

I shall be very glad of the guidance of the president of the RIBA on these vexed points.



AND WHAT does an advertiser do if he publishes a photograph of the magnificent, historic skyline of the city of Durham? The copyright act was not in force when the cathedral was built so we don't know the names of its designers.

Perhaps it would be easier if any photograph of Durham were credited to Coun Don Robson, the dynamic leader of Durham county council (Eyes passim). Readers may recall Don's valiant efforts to bring this world heritage site kicking and screaming into the 1980s by trying to encourage development at Aykley Heads and other green sites around the city. These were defeated by the county council's own agreed structure plan in which there is a presumption against the commercial development of parkland areas.

But Desperate Don has not given up. The county council is now redrafting the structure plan and is seeking the approval of the secretary of state to abandon the presumption against development and the designation of "area of great landscape value". Instead, attracting new industries is regarded as more important than preserving the "green belt" around the city. Of course there are parts of the county with massive unemployment which would benefit from development, but is that a reason to wreck the setting of one of the great sites of Europe? Such is local democracy.

'Piloti'

From where [Paul] Gascoigne lives, at least for the moment, he can look down on the Eternal City, and surely even he can sense that his passing through Rome is a speck in history.

ROB HUGHES
The Times

Signs Of Masculinity

The third annual postgraduate conference at the University of Leeds: *Wednesday 12th July 1995*

We invite proposals for papers for this conference at the school of English, University of Leeds. It intends to respond and add to recent theoretical debates about masculinity, and apply them to a variety of cultural material. We intend to discuss the following topics, although other suggestions are welcome: sodometries, effeminacy versus the libertine, the romantic (phallic) quest, monsters, vampires and virility, nervous disorders, violence and murder in contemporary film, homosexuality and the empire, cyborgs, the (dead) male body, the homoerotic/homosocial, the return of the wild man, and yoghurt.

Circular issued by Department of English, Leeds University

"WILDEFIRE" with STUART WILDE

This seminar is about the warrior's path in today's world and the work of the modern Knights Templar. Participants will study occult masculine sexuality as a power tool.

THIS SEMINAR IS DEFINITELY NOT FOR BEGINNERS — it contains new material that has never been published or recorded. Seminar participants will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement that they will not discuss the seminar subject matter with anybody else or make public use or reproduction of the information given. Participants will also be required to undergo simple, disciplines prior to the event.

Kindred Spirit

Multimedia comes to the music world this week with a concert by the innovative Melbourne clarinettist Brigid Burke.

Ms Burke will integrate music, visuals and theatre in a performance of her own work.

One of her pieces, ***The Bottled Fable,*** **arose from a bag of eye makeup given to her by her mother which had an alienating effect on her face.**

In the performance, Ms Burke explores her relationship with her mother through their mutual experiences and expectations of eye makeup, the rawness of no makeup and advertising.

Staff Magazine,
University of Queensland

Pseuds Corner

Sally Morgan's work explores the fragility of knowledge and the impossibility of certainty. You are invited to measure your heart and to understand what cannot be understood. You are invited to make truth immutable through the exacting processes of archaeology. The crypt will be open over two days, during which time you may enter the installation and, if you choose, excavate for meaning.

Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol

In the future all books will be written by Mark Leyner, and all books already written will wish they had been. *Et Tu, Babe* is the literary equivalent of Jolt Cola; if it was a record it would consist entirely of samples — of records that consist entirely of samples.

Everything Leyner writes is primary fiction. 1983's *I Smell Esther Williams* reads like the screeching sound you get when you drag a balloon down a baby's face, while *My Cousin, My Gastroenterologist* (1990) has the power of a gang of angry lorries. But *Et Tu, Babe* is his masterpiece; it is nuclear, it is a thing that shines.

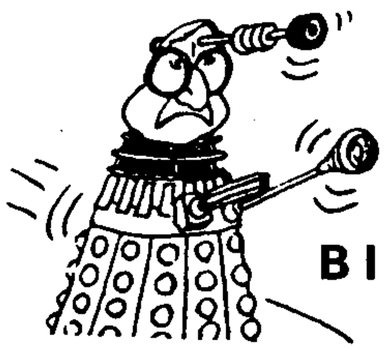
It tells the story of Mark Leyner's burgeoning megalomania, his amazingly intense experiences and the personal qualities that make him the cult author he is.

There are massive stylistic digressions, and negligible plot. But it is a *Life of Doctor Johnson* for the 1990s — if you accept the Doctor as an insane, testosterone-fuelled body-builder who watched too much TV and read too many technology mags.

BEN MOOR
Wired

Contributors: E. Strobes, C. Preston, R. Roper, A. Non, C. Shelbourn, A. Powell, W. Banfield.

£10 paid for entries



BIRTSPEAK

NO MONEY for new programmes — but the BBC can still find time and money to talk complete bollocks to itself.

"Who are our Customer Champions?" asks the latest piece of Birtian gobbledegook: a search for the most "customer-focused" person or team, whatever that means, within BBC Resources, whatever that is.

"Has someone who works for BBC Resources made a particularly good impression on you?" asks the nomination paper, sent by Liz Wilkinson, organiser of this year's Resources conference. "Has that person made your day much better by being truly helpful and totally customer focused? Has he or she taken time and trouble, beyond the normal BBC call of duty, to ensure that arrangements between you have run specially smoothly? If so, please nominate that person or team... as a 'Customer Champion'."

The focus of the conference will be, er, "Customer Focus", during which "Resources will celebrate the achievements of its 'Customer Champions' and reward them."

TV

The Outer Limits
(BBC2)

LAST YEAR Michael Jackson, the BBC2 controller, chanced upon an unexpected hit, *The X-Files* — an American-made series about a kind of FBI Weird Squad investigating apparently supernatural or extra-terrestrial occurrences — and supernaturally expanded the audience share of the channel by pulling in audiences as high as seven million.

Admittedly this was one of those strange series with the spooky ability to be in two places at once: it was also to be seen on Sky under one of the "sweetheart" — or, more accurately, "gangbang" — deals now frequent in British TV. But, even so, "Wacko" wasn't going to look gift ectoplasm in the face.

Ideally a freak success on BBC2 should just remain as one element in the eclectic mix of programmes. The mould should be thrown away. These, though, are tough times; and any successful innovation is likely to be seized upon with glee. The mould will be carefully placed at one end of a production line. People complain about "repeats" in television, meaning simply the re-showing of hit programmes, but there is another kind of repeat which is the scheduling of a lookalike for something that has just worked. Hence in the Monday night peak-time slot recently vacated by the *X-Files*, prepare to welcome a revival of the 1960s American sci-fi series, *The Outer Limits*.

This show was premiered by the American network ABC in 1963 and was famous for a sonorous opening voiceover which said: "There is nothing wrong with your TV set. We are controlling transmission. We can control the vertical. We can control the horizontal. For the next hour we can control all that you see and hear and think. You are watching a drama that reaches from the deepest reaches of the inner mind to the... *Outer Limits*!" The "we" were supposed to be some kind of alien or psychic crew.

Although it only lasted a couple of seasons, the series has become something of a cult among serious telly-heads, and references to that intro are to be found in the work of pop-culture American writers such as Pynchon, De Lillo and Sam Shepherd. Michael Jackson would have been about seven when the series was screened here and you can bet it went straight into one of his programme-spotter's notebooks.

Of course he could simply have dusted off the original shows, but what passed for spooky in 1963 probably seems pretty mainstream today. (Indeed, one of the original *Outer Limits* shows was a nightmare about a humanoid taking over a TV station and leading it to a complete commissioning freeze because of his lunatic accounting methods). So in association with the Americans he made it all again. Although the special effects now have the benefit of computer-generation, the show looks and sounds pretty much as it used to. Which is a pity.

The first episode, "Blood Brothers", was about sibling scientists who, when working for a sinister pharmaceuticals corporation with a "genetically-engineered retro-virus" (somehow you got the impression that the screenwriter was clinging to jargon a little here) which would be used by the US military to subdue the civilian population, seemed to have chanced upon a miracle cure for all ailments. Inevitably, the panacea proved to be fool's serum.

There was only one really spooky thing about this episode. And that was that Martin Kemp, playing one of the two brothers, was clearly an Englishman trying not very well to sound American. But the plot never unveiled the imposter as such, and, again, you had to assume that the alien force which had taken over our sets had the same kind of problems with international co-production casting that mere human television producers do.

Wacko's real mistake, though, is that *The X-Files* was at least slightly subversive: it offered the possibility that there really were strange things going on in the world. *The Outer Limits* is a deeply conservative, affirmative show. Every episode ends with a little moral: those scientists searching for eternal life had failed to realise, we were told, that ageing and death are a natural part of the process. *The Outer Limits*? Get outer here.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

TIM GARDAM, boyish head of weekly programmes at the BBC, sent a memo to all his editors on 25 April reminding them of the need "to ensure impartiality in the balance of coverage of all political parties in the run-up to the local elections".

Since the elections were by then only a week and a half away, it seemed rather late to mention the subject. Still, as he explained, he didn't expect any problems since "political reporting is not a major part of our remit".

Whoops! Gardam had apparently forgotten that one of his programmes is *Panorama* — which was banned by the Scottish courts from showing its interview with John Major earlier in April. However, in an article for *Inside News* — the BBC news and current affairs department's magazine — Gardam has penned a vigorous defence of his conduct in that affair. "It is not true to claim that Downing Street chose the date," he writes. "The BBC made the choice when it accepted the date Downing Street proposed in reply to our request."

Clear?

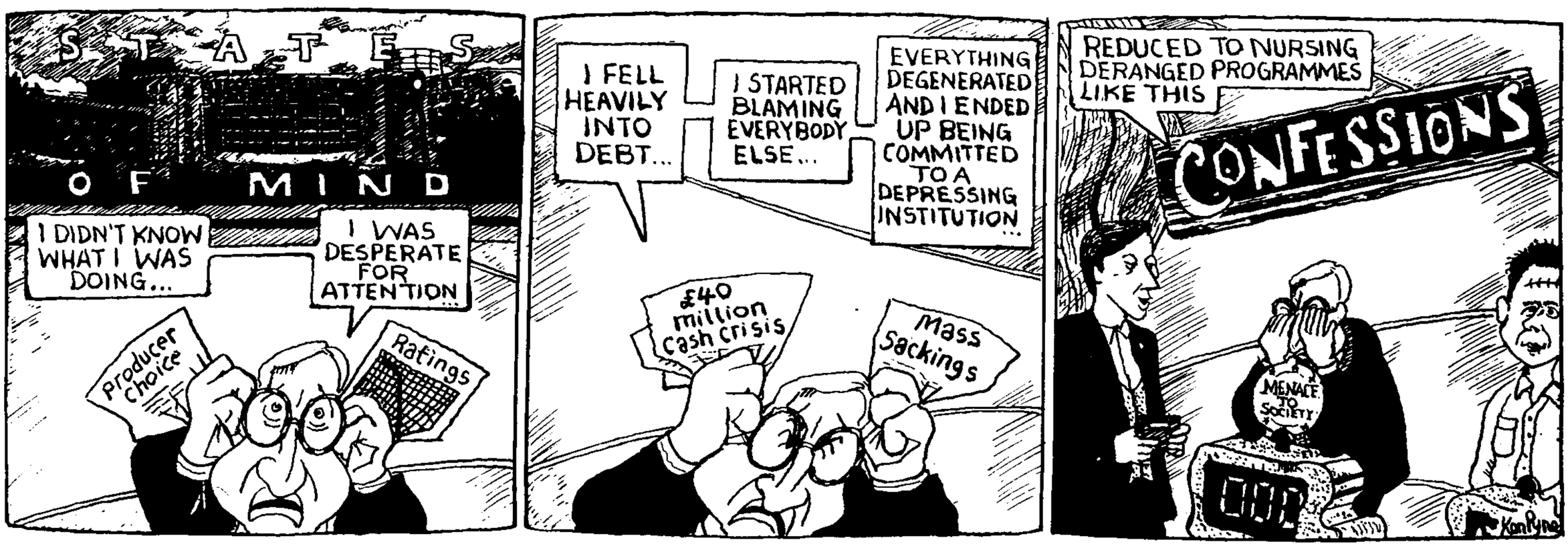
NEW evidence emerges of the dynamic working practices at Britain's newest TV station, Mirror Television, which is run by Kelvin "Bosnia it isn't" MacKenzie and Janet Street-Porter, a pair so fond of one another they are no longer on speaking terms.

The station's hapless "showbiz correspondent", one Simon Holland, was sent to secure a series of interviews with the rich and famous. Unfortunately Mirror TV's budgets do not run to such luxuries as lighting, sound or even camera operators, so Holland had to combine all these duties with the job of interviewer.

This means that as he is busy operating the camera, the interviewees have to hold their own microphones. Such penny-pinching was too much for Joan Collins, who, upon having a sweaty microphone planted in her palm, turned on her heel and stalked out of the room.

Meanwhile Labour-supporting millionaire Lord Hollick must have enjoyed Mirror Group boss David Montgomery's reluctant withdrawal from the auction for Channel 5. It was Hollick who provided "Rommel" with his entrée into the exciting world of the post-Maxwell Mirror Group. Alas, as Rommel embarked on a ruthless campaign of mass redundancies, the two men became estranged.

Spurning the *Mirror*, Hollick's MAI financial services group (which already controls Anglia and Meridian) linked up with *Financial Times* owner Pearson and Radio Luxembourg for its C5 bid. Mirror Group meanwhile ended up in a consortium with America's NBC — which eventually decided that Montgomery's figures didn't add up. NBC then sensibly pulled out, leaving the Ulsterman high and dry. Given that Rommel sees his company's future as screen based, NBC's betrayal was a bitter blow (and Hollick should stop laughing any day now).


STATES OF MIND
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING...
I WAS DESPERATE FOR ATTENTION...
Producer Choice
Ratings
I FELL HEAVILY INTO DEBT...
I STARTED BLAMING EVERYBODY ELSE...
EVERYTHING DEGENERATED AND I ENDED UP BEING COMMITTED TO A DEPRESSING INSTITUTION...
£40 million Cash crisis
Mass Sackings
REDUCED TO NURSING DERANGED PROGRAMMES LIKE THIS
CONFESSIONS
MENACE TO SOCIETY
Ken Pyne

BBC's *Money Box Live* programme chose Penny Webster from Bacon and Woodrow to give pensions advice to listeners. This was an inspiring choice: Bacon and Woodrow were actuaries to the Mirror Group pension fund.

The company's own personnel policies are equally inspiring: staff are currently being fired in their droves as part of company cutbacks, and morale is said to be at rock bottom as secretaries are dispensed with and mail room deliveries are cancelled at the flagship Epsom office. The cutbacks are believed to be the result of an expensive lawsuit brought by NRG over merger advice given by Bacon and Woodrow.

WORLD OF HYPE

"BRITAIN's first black show-jumper has gone from a life of bed-hopping, drugs and petty crime to be a contender for the '96 Olympics," the *Sun* announced excitedly two weeks ago. "Now Rastafarian Oliver Skeete has told all in his autobiography, *Jumping The Odds* — serialised exclusively in the *Sun*".

Thus continues one of the most absurd hype campaigns of modern times. Thanks to the efforts of his manager, boxing promoter Frank Maloney, the dreadlocked Skeete has become increasingly ubiquitous in the past year or so: profiled in glossy mags, interviewed in the tabloids and invited on TV chatshows to issue expert advice to youngsters who dream about a career in show-jumping.

As his autobiography reveals, he is indeed an expert — at shagging, thieving and drug-taking. But his reputation as a "top show-jumper" is greeted with derisive laughter in the equestrian world. Far from being a potential Olympic medal-winner, he would do well to win an egg-and-spoon race at a Pony Club rally.

On the British Show-Jumping Association's ranking list, competitors are awarded one point for every £50 of prize money won internationally, or for every £25 won in Britain. A top rider such as John Whitaker, for instance, has 6,300 points. How does the great Skeete compare?

Here is the record of his glorious career to date: in January 1993 he came fifth in a "newcomers' class", winning £6; later that year he came fifth equal in a "freshman" competition, winning £7; last October, in another small-time show, he again came fifth, pocketing £5. And, er, that's it — giving him the grand total of *nul points*, and placing him nowhere in the British rankings.

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

JUST when professional musicians were about to toast the European Union, the government stepped in to break up the party.

Brussels wanted Britain to fall into line with other European countries in sharing the money paid by radio stations, discos and the like for public performance of records equally with the musicians who made the records in the first place.

But the government threw up its hands in horror at the thought of lots of leftie musicians sharing in the spoils. In proposals it has published to amend the copyright act, it has decreed that it should be for the record companies themselves to decide what is a "reasonable proportion" of the royalty.

So British musicians can forget about receiving fair shares. The money will continue to go where it always has: into the pockets of the fat cats who run the multinational recording companies.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

HACKWATCH: THE OKLAHOMA BOMBING

"HE IS crazed with the spell of far Arabia," the poet Walter de la Mare once wrote. "They have stolen his wits away." A collective craziness of the same kind seems to have overtaken the fourth estate as soon as news broke out that a bomb had gone off in Oklahoma City. Here are the highlights of Fleet Street's finest hour:

Thursday 20 April: Most of *Today*'s front page is filled with a picture of a fireman cradling a bloodstained baby who was caught in the explosion. IN THE NAME OF ISLAM screams the headline. *Today* hack Barry Wigmore rams the point home, announcing that "the outrage was being blamed on Islamic militants" — a self-fulfilling pronouncement.

Today even tries to take the credit for being the first to pin the atrocity on mad mullahs, a week before it had actually happened. "Last Friday... we told of fears about a Lockerbie-style attack following the arrest of Muslim fanatic Ranzi Ahmed Yousef and the discovery of a bomb factory in the Philippines," it boasts.

According to the *Daily Mail*: "The Oklahoma carnage bears all the hallmarks of the work of Islamic fundamentalists with a fanatical hatred of America." The *Daily Express* is equally confident. "Moslem fanatics are key suspects as US mourns victims of one-ton car bomb," its front-page headline declares. Why so? "Islamic fundamentalists have already proved they are prepared to bomb in the US," reporter Philip Finn explains. "They blew up the World Trade Centre in New York, and a trial is under way..." Indeed it is. But the *Express* has no compunction about preempting the jury's verdict.

Although this "proof" might seem rather slender — because Arabs let off one bomb, they are responsible for all other bombings — it's good enough for the Street of Shame. The *Sun*'s American correspondent Caroline Graham, better known as the unofficial biographer of Camilla Parker-Bowles, reports authoritatively that "the horror blast, heard 30 miles away, is thought to be the work of Arab terrorists."

As always on these occasions, resourceful hacks are able to find "experts" to back up their preconceptions. Mark Colon, a "bomb expert of the Institute of Security and Intelligence", tells *Today* that "the bombing was almost certainly a result of Arab terrorism". Steve Emerson, "a leading expert on terrorism", informs the London *Evening Standard* that "the bombing in Oklahoma City was done with the intention of inflicting as many casualties as possible, and that is a Middle Eastern trait." Meanwhile an unnamed "FBI source" assures the *Standard* that the bomb "has Middle East terrorism written all over it".

Friday 21 April: Day Two and the press is still convinced that it has the case sewn up. "Wednesday's attack does not look like the act of any domestic terrorist group," concludes the *Daily Telegraph*'s Washington correspondent, Stephen Robinson. Although his colleague Patricia Wilson reports that "Arab-Americans condemned the bombing and warned against speculation about the perpetrators", Wilson herself obviously knows better. "Most Americans," she writes, "were asking 'Why Oklahoma?' But terrorism experts, citing connections between the state and Islamic extremism, believe the better question may be 'Why not?' Oklahoma has an Islamic Centre and the state is home to about 5,000 Muslims..."

Yet another *Telegraph* correspondent in America, Hugh Davies, observes that all the evidence so far "gave credence to the theory that Islamic fundamentalists might be to blame for the explosion". A prime suspect is the Iranian-backed Islamic Jihad, "although opinion was split, with suggestions that President Saddam Hussein of Iraq might have been involved". The *Telegraph* produces yet another "expert on Middle Eastern terror groups", Ariel Merari, to support its claim that "investigators should focus on Islamic terrorists".

Better still, the papers can now name one of these "terrorists". Ibrahim Ahmed, a Jordanian American, "was nabbed at Heathrow Airport yesterday", as the *Sun* puts it. His luggage contained material "useful for making bombs" — such as a telephone answering machine and a pair of tweezers.

In fact, before arriving at Heathrow Ibrahim Ahmed had already been interviewed by the FBI in Chicago and released, as it was quickly realised that he had nothing to do with the Oklahoma bombing. But why let this tiresome fact stand in the way of a good anti-Arab scare story? US BOMB SUSPECT SEIZED AT HEATHROW yells the *Daily Star*'s front-page headline. " 'Bomber' Held at Heathrow" echoes the *Daily Express*, describing Ahmed as a "prime suspect in the Oklahoma bombing". Rather confusingly, it adds that "although the arrested man is of Jordanian origin, Israeli experts said the bombing could have been planned in Baghdad and launched with Iraqi backing".

On its leader page the *Express* carries an article by John Ingham (son of Sir Bernard) warning that the "Islamic militants" who are waging a "war of urban terrorism" against the US government may soon use nuclear weapons. A similar piece in the *Daily Mirror*, written by an "expert" from the Centre for the Study of Terrorism, reminds us that "the bomb blast on a United States government office in Oklahoma City is being linked to the trial of 13 Islamic militants."

In *Today* Barry Wigmore reports that "thousands of peaceful, law-abiding Muslims are worried that the action of a minority of fanatics will give them all a bad name." These fanatics presumably include Fleet Street hacks.

Meanwhile the *Daily Mail* speculates on "links between the carnage in Oklahoma and the arrest of a fanatical Islamic terror suspect thousands of miles away". It treats its readers to a full-page profile of the sinister "master bomber", Ramzi Ahmed Yousef.

The *Independent*'s diplomatic editor, Michael Sheridan, focuses on "Middle Eastern terrorist groups loosely linked to members of the Iranian government", arguing that "the Iranian question is bound to come to the forefront of inquiries into the Oklahoma blast". In an editorial, the *Indie* declares that although it is still unclear who planted the bomb, "circumstantial evidence points to an Islamic terrorist group". The paper's Washington correspondent, Rupert Cornwell (brother of John le Carré), points out that if a Middle Eastern connection is established, there will be a backlash against all Arab-Americans. "Small wonder that many thoughtful Americans are quietly hoping against hope that this car-bombing, for all its foreign hallmarks, is a purely domestic affair... But most early signs suggest otherwise."

The *Economist*, which prides itself on its omniscience, delivers a typically magisterial verdict. "As is inevitable on these occasions, instant theories were advanced on the basis of little or no evidence. One linked the bomb to the deadly raid by federal agents exactly two years ago on David Koresh's Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. Another, even more far-fetched, connected Wednesday morning's explosion with the scheduled execution in Arkansas of a white supremacist. The more serious speculation was about the involvement of people connected to fundamentalist forces in the Middle East..."

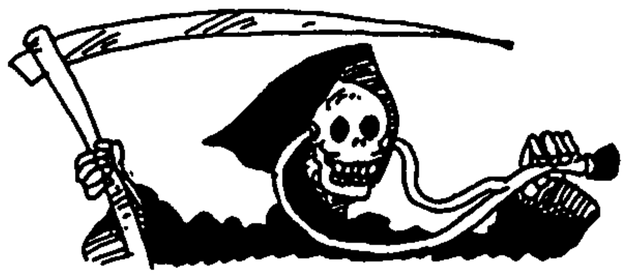
Saturday 22 April: *Whoops!* A man has been arrested for the Oklahoma bombing, but he is neither an Arab nor a Muslim. Timothy McVeigh is in fact a white American neo-Nazi.

Surprisingly, the press takes this development in its stride. Hugh Davies of the *Telegraph* writes knowingly that the arrest "seemed to confirm what federal officials had increasingly been saying: that the bombing in Oklahoma City was an instance in home-grown terrorism." Can he by any chance be related to the Hugh Davies who, only 24 hours earlier, had fingered Iran and Iraq as "prime suspects"?

CHRIS TARRANTINO BREAKFAST SHOW

"Don't listen to fucking Chris Evans, you fucking fucks..."

DOING THE ROUNDS



Focus on Bristol

BACK in May 1992 (*Eye* 793), *Doing the Rounds* exposed the abysmal paediatric cardiac surgery unit at the United Bristol healthcare trust (UBHT). As far back as 1988 the mortality rates were so high that the unit was dubbed "The Killing Fields" and "The Departure Lounge" by those in the know.

Despite a long crisis of morale among the unit's staff, surgeons repeatedly refused to publish their mortality rates in a manner that would allow comparison with other units. John Roylance, the trust chief executive, and senior officials at the department of health were fully aware of the problems, but initially chose to ignore them.

Other consultants working in the trust admitted in private that the unit was a disgrace and that they wouldn't send their children to it — but they continued to send other people's children there "to support the hospital". The word on the paediatric cardiac surgery circuit in 1992 was "everyone knows about Bristol".

A secret audit kept by consultant anaesthetist Dr Stephen Bolsin — which was first published in the *Eye* — was the start of the unit's undoing. Dr Bolsin found that the unit's mortality rate for repairing Fallot's tetralogy, a congenital heart malformation, was between 20 and 30 percent. In Liverpool, 160 babies had similar operations without a single death.

He then found that the mortality rate for arterial switch, an operation to connect congenitally transposed arteries from the heart, was 30 percent in Bristol, compared to 10 percent elsewhere in Britain and nearly 0 percent in America (*Eye* 797). This figure worsened to 61 percent by 1993, though parents of children who died from these operations were told they had "a 70 to 80 percent chance of success".

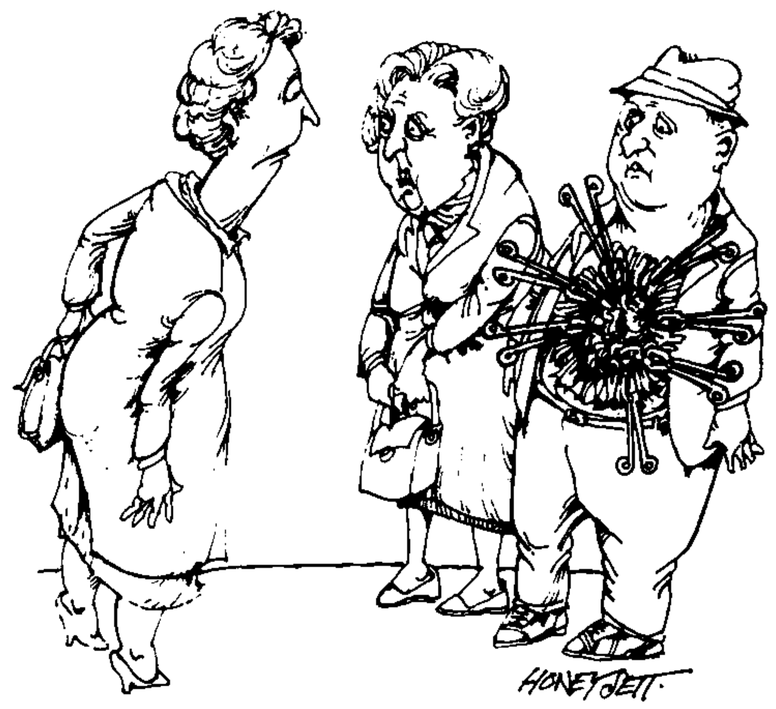
In September 1992 (*Eye* 804), it was revealed that James Wishart, the senior paediatric cardiac surgeon, had been appointed chairman of the hospital management committee and medical adviser to the trust board. For whatever reason, he did not alert them to the disastrous death rates of his unit. Overall, a baby was twice as likely to die from open heart surgery in his unit than any other in the country.

Dr Bolson first confronted his trust superiors with his findings in 1993, though they were already well aware of them. He received little support and eventually took his findings to Dr Peter Dole at the department of health. In October 1993, 18 months after the *Eye*'s leak, neonatal switch operations were cancelled at the hospital. However, in January 1995, a switch operation was performed on an 18-month-old child who died the next day. The DoH then banned the unit from doing all operations.

A surgical unit can have bad mortality figures for a number of reasons. Sometimes it is because they select particularly difficult cases. Sometimes it is because of a lack of specialist staff and equipment. And sometimes it is because some of the surgeons are slow, dangerous, cumbersome and too arrogant to acknowledge their own limitations, even when babies are dying around them.

Which or whom is to blame in this case is unclear. The trust has refused to release a damning report by independent investigators or to divulge its statistics since the problem was first highlighted in 1988. The fact that it took the department of health *seven years* to suspend all operations at the unit is a disgrace, and the trust, the government, the NHS and the taxpayer now look likely to face huge compensation claims from the distressed parents of up to 100 children who may have died as a result of the incompetence and self-protective instincts of senior doctors and managers at UBHT.

Some parents wrote to the *Eye* after the initial disclosures and were strongly advised to demand that their children be referred to units in Oxford or Southampton. However, many remained in the dark



"They were halfway through the operation when the money ran out"

until the *Daily Telegraph* and *BBC West* (whom MD tipped off in 1992) finally caught up with the story in January. Most were furious that they had not been told of the ban by the trust, but as the press officer explained pitifully: "We really wanted to do this right, and we fully intended to ring them before they found out somewhere else. But we couldn't have called them too early because one of them might have leaked it to the press."

Were it not for the courageous whistleblowing of Dr Stephen Bolson, the death toll would have been even higher.

M.D.

Ward Closure Improves Hospital Care for Elderly Patients

Health News Weekly (Salisbury)

DOWN ON THE FARM

ON A forlorn attempt to "generate vote winning ideas on agriculture" for the next general election, Droopy "Willie" Waldegrave, the subsidies minister, has set up a "policy group" to write the agriculture component of the next Conservative party manifesto.

Waldegrave has told this strictly "political" group it should "focus on ideas that will give advantage to the Conservative party", suggesting that they should develop ideas on, among other things, the common agricultural policy, animal welfare and "reclaiming the rural vote".

Notices of meetings have been sent to a number of well-known agriculture experts, not least Archie Norman, chief executive of the Asda supermarket group, who should know all there is to know about winning rural votes; and to that great supporter of the rural economy Edward Robinson, chief executive of Booker Agribusiness.

In his haste to spread the word, however, Droopy — or his egregious special adviser David Rutley — seems to have forgotten an important point of protocol: ministers acting on party political matters should not avail themselves of the resources of the ministries they head. Perhaps it was indeed an oversight that the meeting notifications were sent out on the Maffia's headed paper and at least one meeting has been held in conference room "A" of the ministry's headquarters in Whitehall Place.

ONE surprise member of Droopy's group is Sir Jerry Wiggin, currently chairman of the Commons select committee on agriculture. It remains to be seen how a policy adviser to the minister can reconcile this position with acting as a supposed independent backbench "watchdog" on the activities of ministers.

To judge from Wiggin's recent performance on his committee — considering the licensing of veterinary medicines — he might just as well join the government team and be done with it. Campaigners who are looking to Wiggin to blow the lid off the ever growing disaster of organophosphorus pesticides — which are poisoning farmers in their hundreds — are likely to be disappointed.

Convening a meeting to examine the head of the government organisation which approved these chemicals — the veterinary medicines directorate — Wiggin was at great pains to tell the assembly how much he had enjoyed the hospitality of the VMD the day before the meeting.

HUMPHREY Errington, maker of Lanark Blue cheese (*Eyes passim*), won an important victory last week which brings him one step nearer to saving his business and ensuring the continued availability of the marque.

In February, after environmental health officers from Clydesdale district council had seized the last remaining stocks of this famous cheese, justice of the peace Elizabeth Wilson was asked to condemn the cheese "contaminated" with *Listeria monocytogenes*.

To determine the fate of the cheese, Wilson took scientific evidence from experts nominated by Clydesdale council but would not allow cross-examination by Errington's QC, Mr Michael Jones. When she condemned the cheese, without giving a reason, Errington appealed to the Edinburgh court of sessions, arguing that the decision "breached the rules of natural justice".

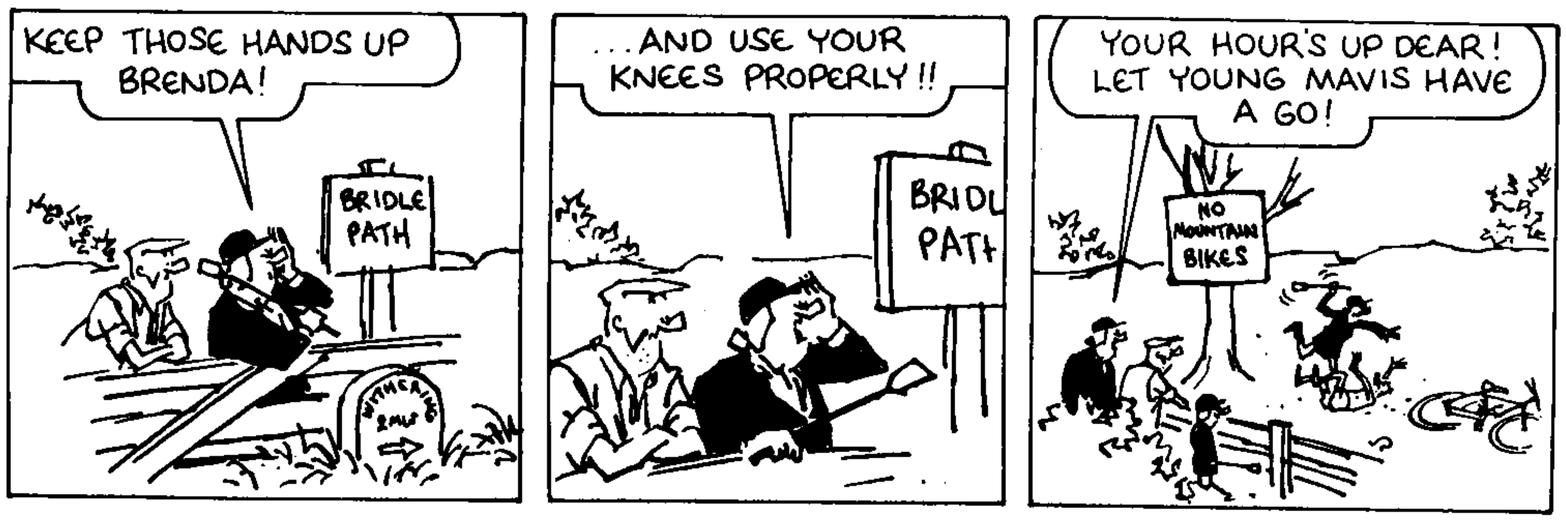
Wilson claimed she had not allowed cross-examination because of the urgency of the case but, after a two-day hearing, concluded on 24 April, Lord Justice Weir agreed that Wilson had acted contrary to natural justice. He ruled that the fitness of the cheese was not a matter of urgency but "of scientific investigation" for which expert evidence should have been tested. Lord Weir also criticised Clydesdale district council for opposing cross-examination.

This all means that the original case must be heard again when Mr Errington will finally know whether he can keep his cheese or not. It would be "highly desirable" to have the case heard by an experienced sheriff rather than an "inexperienced and unassisted lay person", Lord Weir has ruled. The big question is why an "inexperienced and unassisted lay person" was asked to hear the case in the first place.

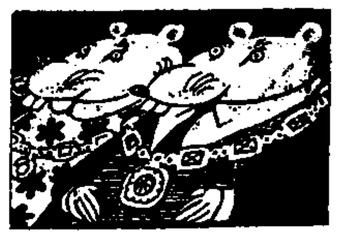
'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


KEEP THOSE HANDS UP BRENDA!
BRIDLE PATH
...AND USE YOUR KNEES PROPERLY!!
BRIDL PATH
YOUR HOUR'S UP DEAR! LET YOUNG MAVIS HAVE A GO!
NO MOUNTAIN BIKES

THE Rotten Borough Advertiser



BRUM TRIFLE

MUHAMMED AFZAL, a wannabe Labour MP in Birmingham's Small Heath-Sparkbrook constituency, has given up fighting for the hearts and minds of party members and is going for stomachs instead — helped by the city council.

The councillor and his supporters have won control of a bizarre organisation called the Pakistani Forum. One of eight forums set up five years ago to represent Birmingham's ethnic communities, it has just filed five years' worth of accounts. This was after someone noticed that despite receiving £13,500 annual grant, plus a full-time salaried worker (all courtesy of the city council for five years) the forum had never said what it did with the money.

Although collated by accountants, there was no audit. Perhaps just as well: the largest spending item in 1993/94 was £4,000 for festivals and lunches. Spending public money on lavish meals is strictly against council rules; but more interesting is where the lunches were held, who attended — and that Coun Afzal was the guest speaker at each one.

The list of directors of the Pakistani Forum could pass as a list of Afzal's best political mates. Vice-chairman Mohammed Ishtiaq is not just a pal, though, he is also chairman of Sparkbrook Labour party. Documents obtained by the *Eye* show that chairman Khawaja Mohammed Shafique is such a bosom pal Afzal called him on his mobile phone 33 times in one month. (The phone is supplied by the council and the bill paid by the public.) Afzal is also a member of the Pakistani Forum's ruling executive body, as is Coun Mohammed Fazal, another pal.

But back to those meals. The venues included the magnificent Botanical Gardens and the Council House banqueting rooms; and while those who attended should have represented Pakistanis from all over the city, almost all came from Sparkbrook and Small Heath — and almost all were members of the Labour party! And the £4,000 declared in the accounts is only half the story. Someone had to arrange the meals, send out invitations and ensure everything ran smoothly. That someone was Jawaid Akhtar, the forum development officer, whose salary is paid by the council.

It may be small beer when compared to the thousands extracted from public funds by Afzal's rival, Roger Godsiff, for urban renewal grants. But independent minded members of Sparkbrook and Small Heath Labour parties might ask if anyone in this slimy crew deserves really to represent them and their party.

● CONGRATULATIONS to Nicola Pountney, who in a few short years has risen from humble secretary to media supremo in the £25 million-a-year economic development department.

Her puzzlingly speedy rise started after she became secretary to Coun Albert Bore, the then departmental chair, whose taxi habit, readers will recall, once cost the city up to £1,200 a month. Nicola was delighted when Bore was recently cleared by a jury of assaulting his wife, Coun Najma Hafeez... So delighted that she and her two-year-old son moved in with him.

THIS ENGLAND

SHAMED housing director Graham England, accused by the district auditor in his provisional report of "gerrymandering" in Westminster, has been rewarded for his role in the notorious "homes-for-votes" scandal — he's been appointed the council's director of external (ie public) relations on £67,000 a year.

Among England's achievements as housing boss was to prepare briefing notes for then leader Dame Shirley Porter on how to replace horrible Labour-supporting council tenants with pleasant Tory home-owners.

His handwritten notes at private meetings also proved useful during district auditor John Magill's inquiry — especially the ones which went "...economic sense for G-Mander... social engineering including housing... be mean and nasty to the homeless... homeless: try and ship them out".

Meanwhile more has emerged on Westminster's treatment of residents on its Walterton and Elgin estate who wanted to become their own landlords. The council went to extraordinary lengths to "dissuade" tenants from voting to opt out of council control, including setting up a bogus residents' group which managed to dupe the local Tory MP, John Wheeler, into supporting it.

Wheeler, according to a recent Labour parliamentary motion, then wrote to the Housing Corporation opposing the residents' plans and "making unsubstantiated and defamatory allegations against [the estate's] residents".

ONE-HORSE RACE

LABOUR's fight for racial equality continues unabated in Tower Hamlets.

A cornerstone of the struggle is the appointment within social services of Mr Ghulani Robbani as head of service development for the ethnic minority community. Mr Robbani is well connected: his brother Ghulam Mortuza is deputy mayor of London's rottenest borough.

Thanks to an inflation-beating hike in council tax, meanwhile, Labour is showing selective generosity in its grants to worthy causes. A recent meeting of the social services committee agreed to give the exclusively Bangladeshi Nami Samity Women's Association playgroup a £12,000 grant for new play equipment for its children. At the same meeting the Good Shepherd Mission, a Christian organisation, asked for a £1,700 grant for new play equipment for its "Bouncers" group. Even though 20 percent of the kids at Bouncers are from ethnic minorities and even the group is open to children from *all* religions, its application was branded "discriminatory" and thrown out.

A council drone said: "The council does not discriminate on the grounds of religion which was why the Good Shepherds Mission did not receive a grant."

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

SWANSEA, Wales's second city, has been using expensive colour press adverts to recruit a new chief executive to head the unitary authority that is taking over the borough. Above the caption "A New Dawn" is an enchanting scene of the sun rising over a mountain top. Unfortunately, the dramatic landscape shot is of the Yorkshire Dales — there not apparently being enough suitable mountains in Wales.

IN BRIEF

SO. Farewell then Hackney's ruling Labour group: in a lightning coup its members, including leader John McAfferty, have been ousted by disgruntled party members. What had Hackney's leaders done? They had sacked housing director Bernard Crofton for daring to expose town hall corruption (see *Eyes passim*). Will the full story now at last appear?

KNOWSLEY: The furniture recycling business which got a £70,000 start-up loan from the council — and in which three people involved were either on the council or related to people who were (*Eye* 846) — has gone bust owing Knowsley £37,000. "Business graduate" Kevin Grannell, son of councillor Ted, had overlooked new laws related to inflammable material and recycled furniture.

MANCHESTER: Ringway Developments, the public-private company set up by the Labour city council, Manchester Ship Canal Company and Amec, has received £3.5m, including £1m of public money. Now it can afford to hire a consultant cum acting chief executive called Alan Perkins — who recently quit as Ringway's £70,000 chief executive with a £35,000 golden handshake.

BENT: Nkechi Amalu-Johnson, the ex-councillor convicted of social security and mortgage fraud, remains a governor at St Raphael's Heritage Family Centre nursery where she has introduced £10 a minute fines for parents who are late picking up their children. Now numbers have dropped from 20 to six, and the governors want her out fearing she jeopardises their £45,000 council grant.

CAMDEN: The council environment department recruited £200,000 worth of "customer service" officers because illiterate engineers couldn't answer letters from the public. The new pen-pushers have now produced: a computerised letter monitoring system, complete with 32-page user guide and glossy poster campaign, while the department limps on £500,000 in the red.

LUVVIES BAFTAS

"He's one of my favourite people on the planet."

BILLY CONNOLLY
introducing Clive James

"He's the funniest man on earth and I owe him my life."

BILLY CONNOLLY
introducing Michael Caine

"She's the sexiest person on earth."

BILLY CONNOLLY
introducing Julie Goodyear

(Continued for several hours)

Submitted by Everyone.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

YABOG

HUSBAND

SIGNAL FAILURES

PETE WATERMAN, trainspotting pop entrepreneur, has now realised what rail professionals knew decades ago: special trains aren't feasible unless run on the margins of a business. But it's all too late: BR and the government already have Waterman's wad.

Since the days of the Great Western Railway special trains to the seaside and elsewhere have made use of rolling stock that would otherwise have stood idle at weekends. The only exceptions to this marginal rule have been premium luxury trains like the Orient Express and steam engines maintained using volunteer labour.

What Waterman bought on April fool's day was the InterCity special trains unit, a financial non-starter. For what was marginal to InterCity suddenly became Waterman's core business, which would now have to generate profit. At the same time the other rail businesses with which he has to deal have started to charge core, rather than marginal rates. (Last month, for example, the Green party was quoted train drivers' hire fees of 80 hours to run an excursion of 12 hours' travel).

Most people wouldn't touch the special unit with a bargepole. But Waterman jumped in feet first, magnanimously claiming he was saving an area of rail business which would otherwise sink without trace. What he got for his money were 200 1960s carriages and a few old engines, most of which are useful only at weekends and in the peak holiday season.

He also inherited the rights to the white elephant "land cruises" to the Scottish Highlands, 12 out of 14 of which have been cancelled. His Merrymaker trains for cheap family days out are hugely undercut by road coaches (because of the unfair pricing regime described in *Eye* 868), and half the programme was thrown out quickly. Cancellations have occurred in other parts of his programme where he faces competition from rival organisations taking advantage of the time-honoured and much cheaper practice of using marginal train capacity.

When Waterman realised he had bought a pig in a poke he attacked the Government's privatisation process in the press. But the unworkability of that system has been well-known for several years, so it seems Waterman didn't do his homework.

But he is finding little sympathy. His knight-in-shining-armour story doesn't wash with rail buffs because they see other organisations running special trains independently of Waterman. And most of the public has never been on a special train and couldn't give a toss anyway. BR is delighted to have got shot of the most unsaleable of its appendages, and the rail regulator's office told Waterman in March he could not have "preferential treatment over other charter operators". Nor will the government, it seems, lift a finger to help.

'Dr B. Ching'

LEGAL NEWS

THE *Eye* would like to put on record its full support for Eileen Pembridge's candidacy for president of the Law Society. There are suggestions that, due to some boring internal politics, she is to step down.

Lord Gnome would be terribly disappointed if a lawyer of Ms Pembridge's monumental standing were to lose out — even though his only contact with her was during the famous libel case of Sonia Sutcliffe v. the *Eye*, where she represented Mrs Ripper.

In the course of correspondence in that action Ms Pembridge continually refused to answer questions about whether her client, Sonia Sutcliffe, had accepted £25,000 from the *Mail on Sunday*. Ms Pembridge maintains she was fully entitled not to do so and that she relied on counsel's advice. It later transpired that Sonia had received the cash and poor Ms Pembridge had to witness the humiliation of her client being accused of "gilding the lily" by QC George Carman. Lord Gnome complained about Ms Pembridge to the solicitors' complaints bureau. She has, however, been cleared and Lord Gnome wishes to make it clear that, this petty point aside, he feels Ms Pembridge would make an absolutely *splendid* Law Society president.

QUANGO NEWS

AS reported in *Eye* 856, lucky old Tesco the supermarket giant has friends in high places — especially Aberdare, where it was able to grab a prime site for a new supermarket selling groceries in one of Britain's most deprived areas.

The land was owned by the Welsh Development Agency, which was then chaired by Gwyn "Golden Boy" Jones who happened to be on the Tesco board. David Malpas, another Tesco director, was — and still is — a WDA board member.

Tesco was allowed to bid *twice* for the site (elbowing aside the Co-op), which the dodgy quango was flogging in cooperation with Cynon Valley borough council.

All of which made the WDA's chief executive Barry Hartop squirm in his seat when the Commons public accounts committee grilled him early in April. Sitting alongside him was the lugubrious Michael Scholar, Welsh Office permanent secretary, who conceded that the quango had "contravened" government guidelines.

While Malpas may now be encouraged to spend more time with his cornflakes and courgettes, Jones remains a power in the land. He's a governor of the BBC, which may explain why John Birt's Welsh outpost is less than fearless in pursuing its inquiries.

TUC NEWS

BILL MORRIS, TGWU general secretary, will be looking to his Gibraltar branch to help him win his reelection fight with Jack Dromey.

Morris's ally on Gib is chief minister Joe Bossano, an ex-militant TGWU member, and the T&G vote on Gib is usually rock solid. While members elsewhere show apathy — an 18 per cent turnout — Gib regularly scores 85 percent. This has always struck the Electoral Reform Society as odd: most T&G members there are North Africans who speak little or no English and don't give a fig about the union.

FURTHER EDUCATION

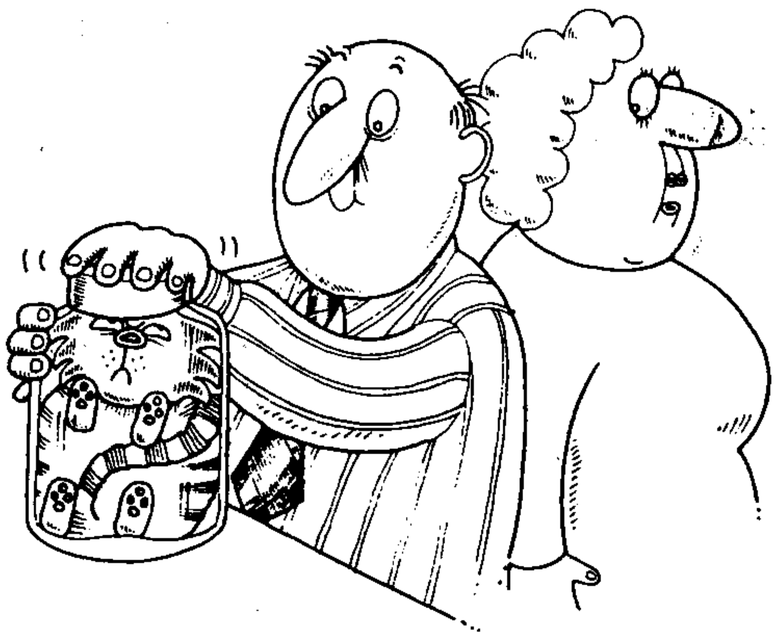
MORE on Bournville College, which decided to scrap its external community courses and call in the police after allegations were made of "fake" courses and spot checks found 95 percent of the classes were not taking place (see *Eye* 866).

Organisers tried to explain the empty classrooms to inspectors with tales of deaths in the family and epidemics among students. Many of the phantom students on the franchised courses' lists were boys and girls from the Asian community, the day and month of whose birth was correctly given on student lists but whose year of birth had often been changed to make them appear 16 or older.

Some of the teachers running the courses weren't up to scratch either. One adult education lecturer said a franchiser employed one of her "English For Speakers Of Other Languages" students to teach a class of their own entitled English Through Sewing. No wonder Inspector Knacker has suggested all West Midlands colleges should investigate their external courses.

Some of these colleges, whose staff are under threat of redundancy, are still managing to send representatives to New York and Chicago, however. More than 200 staff have flown to New York in recent years, with at least 30 going in the last few months from East Birmingham, Handsworth and South Birmingham colleges.

Handsworth College sent four employees to Wisconsin for a four-day Total Quality Management Seminar, whatever that is. Meanwhile some of the colleges are drawing up redundancy plans and others face legal action from Birmingham city council over debts run up before the colleges went under independent control.



"Typical man – always bottling things up"

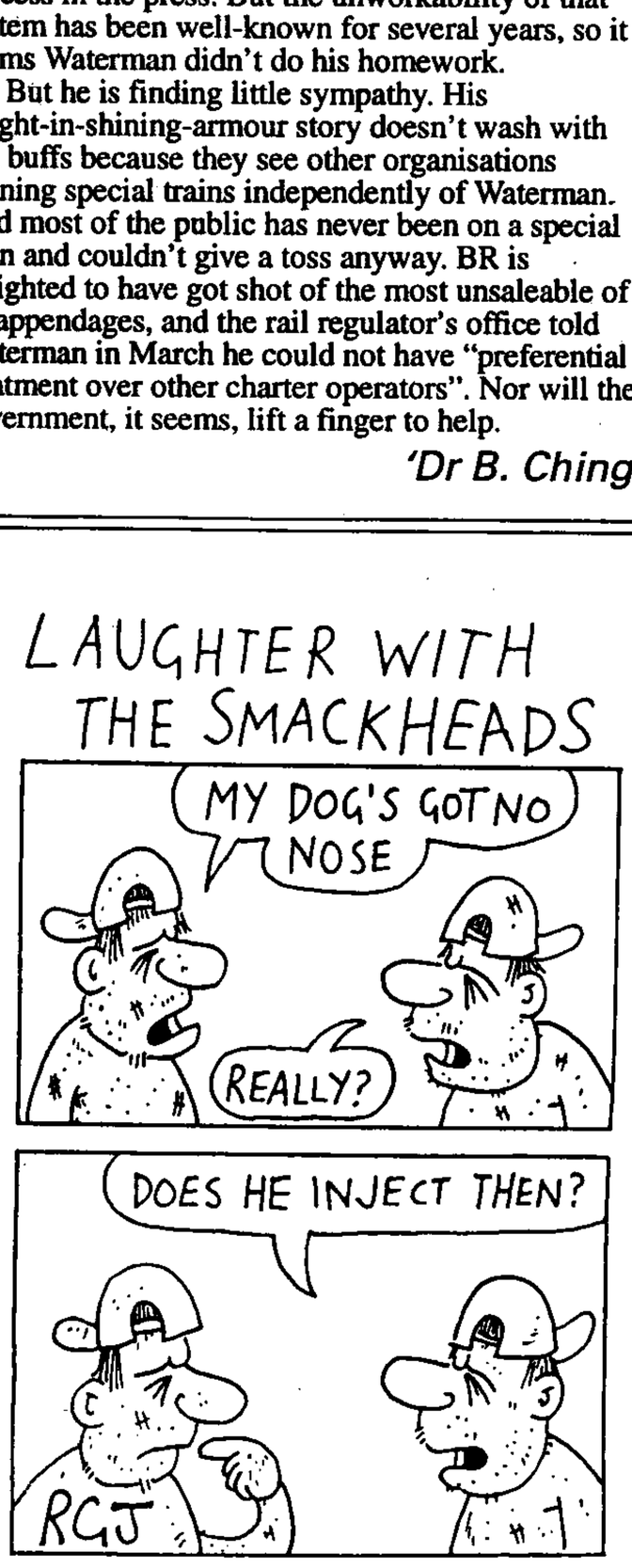
FA CUP

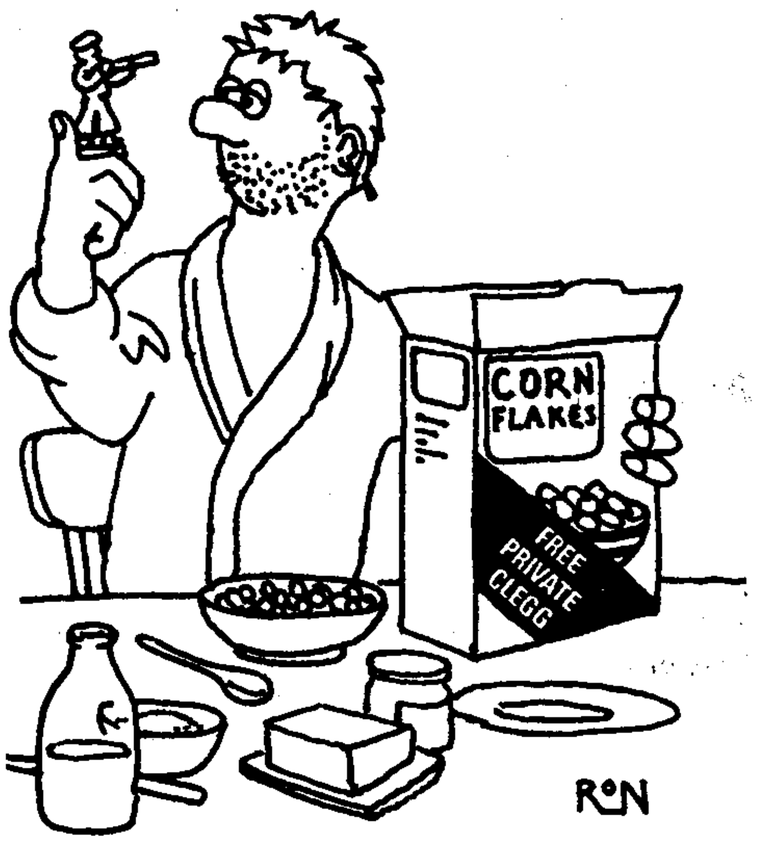
THE *Eye* is launching a competition for the worst financial advisers in Britain. Do you know of an FA worthy of the trophy? All entries happily received.

Leading the field so far is stockbroker Neilson Cobbold, nominated by David Fletcher Rogers of Bedfordshire.

Mr Rogers was advised by the firm to buy shares in 12 companies over the last two years. All of them, bar one, managed the impressive feat of being worth less than their purchase price by 1 April 1995. The firm also advised keeping shares which have since gone down — and of course selling shares which have since gone up. Its star underachievers were Queens Moat Houses, now in a black hole; and Inchcape, which is about 40 percent down.

When the Tonbridge Wells office's performance was brought to the attention of Neilson Cobbold managers they said there was nothing wrong with the way the shares were managed. But Mr Fletcher Rogers begs to differ. After taking the NC advice he amassed a fortune of minus-£7,500. "It was an expensive lesson. I manage my own shares now," he says.





Letters

Private Member

Sir,

As one who has been through the mincer myself and never complained about my treatment by the press, it was disappointing to read (EYE *870) that you say I have called for a privacy law. I have never done so.*

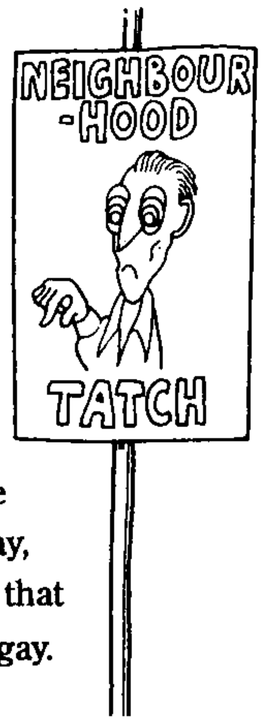
But if nice chaps like Lord Gnome are prepared to get their facts back to front and then regurgitate tired old cuttings, there's no knowing how his more disreputable friends might behave.

Perhaps I should consider changing my mind...

Yours faithfully,
ALAN DUNCAN MP.

PS: If you publish this letter, my fee is £1,000.

Pre-School
Nursery Facility
Rhymes



Boys and girls come
out today,
Or we'll put it about that
you are gay.

Hi-de-hi

Sir,

Re: Lets Parler Prescott (EYE *868). Am I alone in noticing salient similarities in logic, tone, syntax etc, between the rallying-calls of the bluff people's politician John Prescott, and the rallying-calls of Mr Joe Maplin, the bluff holiday-camp owner in the popular TV series* HI-DE-HI*?*

What's more, both characters had boyish, public school types to blush at their fractured grammar, a Mr Blairbrother in the case of Joe Maplin. I can't remember the other chap's name...

Yours faithfulfillingly,
SHARON ERVINIC,
Bidston, Cheshire.

Sir,

I thought your attempt to belittle and ridicule John Prescott MP (Diary, EYE *868) was shabby and not very funny. He is a fearless politician and a man with a social conscience, which is a commodity in very short supply. If more people were like him this country would be a far better place to live in.*

I'm sure there are plenty of less worthy people you could target, we read about them every day: greedy, selfish, callous, get-rich-quick types who care only about themselves. Get stuck into them as you do most of the time, and leave the best of our politicians to get on with the job without harassment.

Yours faithfully,
RALPH TAYLOR,
South Humberside.

Axe to coffee grind

Sir,

Oh dear, what is this I see before me in the EYE*? We are now perfectly happy to "Take the Shilling" of the wonderful caring sharing Nestlé corporation. Perhaps "IF you want something mild and mellow JUST don't drink the (baby) milk (Formula)" would be more appropriate!*

Yours faithfully,
D.J. THORNE,
Newport, Gwent.

O·B·N

Progressing from Steve Wright to Chris Evans is like moving from Salieri to Mozart.

ROBERT HANKS
Independent

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Right arms

Sir,

I refer to HP Sauce (EYE *870). In the item on David Mellor you berate him for his interests in the arms trade — "Merchants of Death" etc.*

In the very next piece you denounce Archie Hamilton for closing an armaments depot causing the loss of 500 jobs and £10 million from the local economy.

So, that's it then — the arms trade is a terrible evil... or a precious economic resource. It just depends on which Tory you're attacking.

Yours sincerely,
P. HUMPHRISS,
Langley, Southampton.

Heading

Sir,

Further to your allegation that I am "head of Confederate Broadcasting", here are the full details:

1. I'm not.
2. Er...
3. That's it.

Yours sincerely,
TREVOR DANN,
Head of BBC Radio 1 Production Department.

Pillars of the community

Sir,

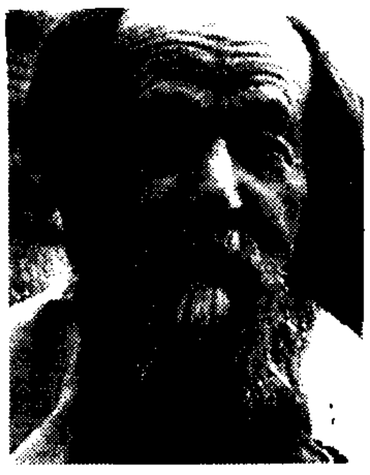
In EYE *870 Pil Lotty makes important points about the Ashmausoleum, now being extended to make it more accessible to the Public (remember them, Pill?) The dirty old balustrade should have been left in its blackened state, not treated to resemble Cockerill's intention (incidentally they were not sandblasted by a naughty contractor, but cleaned in accordance with conservation advice).*

The boarding is to prevent damage during construction, but Poll would not know about such practicalities.

Yours sincerely,
ERIC GABRIEL,
Camberley, Surrey.

Lookalike

Solzhenitsyn



Macaque

Sir,

I happened upon these photographs of The Blessed Alexander Solzhenitsyn and a Japanese macaque on the same page of the RADIO TIMES*, and was surprised by their similarity. I wonder if they could be related.*

Yours ever,
CHARLOTTE DAVIES (Mrs),
Powys.

Matter of law

Sir,

Will your learned correspondent Dr Muhammad Haroon enlighten me? Is the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities in Muslim countries prescribed by Islamic Law? If it is, how kind and gentle would Dr Haroon consider a law which forbade the building of new mosques in Britain, or one which punished the conversion of a Christian to Islam with death? If not, surely the real traducers of Islam are those Muslim rulers and clerics who have distorted its message to serve their own cruelty and ambition. Shouldn't Dr Haroon direct his reproaches at them?

Yours faithfully,
D. WATKINS,
Pontcanna, Cardiff.

Sir,

With reference to Dr Haroon's letter (EYE *870) isn't it time for the followers of Islam to take a joke in the spirit that it is intended?*

Yes, the cartoon was not 100 percent factually correct (most probably simplified so that the writers, and readers, can understand it!) but so what? In the same issue of EYE *as the amputation cartoon there are two which are potentially insulting and factually incorrect: not all vicars like looking at male legs (at least not publicly admitting to it); and I very much doubt if Pontius Pilate advertised "Wash & Go" at the trial of Christ! However, the three cartoons were funny and did not demean anyone, so where's the problem?*

Isn't it time to get off your high-horse and start to accept a joke along with the rest of us?

Yours sincerely,
W.A. INGAMELLS,
Boston, Lincs.

Double-vested

Sir,

I was told about a photograph on your letters page that I have been looking for for some time. I of course refer to the one showing the famous "Siamese Twin" case — a particularly unique phenomenon where an old man and a young Asian woman were born joined at the side. As I am conducting the research for a forthcoming book on Siamese twins, it would be invaluable to me if you could reprint the photograph.

Yours appreciatively,
DR A. JEREMY SHAPIRO,
London N10.

Pet ate

Sir,

I am writing to complain about the "Funny Old World" article on the man who ate his dog (EYE *870).*

I read the column expecting to be amused, and usually read it before anything else, but I found this article to be in very poor taste and too shocking to be funny. I'm sure other animal lovers will have been offended too. Please could you not put in any more items like this in future, I won't renew my subscription if you do. I have always enjoyed your magazine before, and never found cause to complain until now.

Yours faithfully,
MISS J.D. ASHLEY,
Brighton, E. Sussex.

I-SPY

Broad Lands Hotel, Madras

Submitted by Martin Blackall. £10 paid for similar submissions. (*SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.*)

Posts script

Sir,

Your report that this hospital had no applications for junior doctor posts is what we doctors call "columnus imaginarius".

I can reassure readers in north Oxfordshire that their organs and yours remain safe in our hands.

Yours faithfully,
HARVEY MARCOVITCH,
Consultant Paediatrician, Horton General Hospital, Oxford.

Dual purpose

Sir,

Your spiteful little piece concerning East Anglia Roads to Prosperity and Mr Peter Brundell shows scant knowledge by the author. In any event it's way out of date. Peter resigned from EARP's council a year ago.

I helped to found EARP eight years ago. I was then East Anglia secretary of the TUC, and like many thinking people in the region, trades unionists were concerned at the business closures and loss of jobs which were caused by a constantly growing population being imposed on a dated roads system.

We were concerned for the future of our ports, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn among them: neither has rail access; and the road approaches (A10 and A47) have, to this day, long mileages of single carriageway. The eight miles between Acle and Great Yarmouth (A47) are today unchanged from the day the road opened. Eastern Counties buses use this route and only a dimwit would fail to see the natural relationship between the bus company and EARP.

EARP is not anti-public transport. Just bear in mind that buses need roads to run on and even bus lanes cannot be grafted on to roads which are inadequate. So please, stop sniping. We are not about building motorways across rural Norfolk. But we clearly advocate the complete dualling of our strategic roads.

Progressively yours,
IVOR JORDAN,
Girton, Cambridge.

Drain cover

Sir,

*I was intrigued to hear of the Marquesa's experience with Lord Lichfield in Udaipur, India (*EYE *870). Is the 1995 Unipart calender a new design and how exactly do the "tits 'n' arses" fit into it? It all sounds rather painful! Unless of course the Marquesa was using an American "spel chekker" on her word processor and actually meant to use the word "calendar"!*

Pedantically yours,
JOHN FLETCHER,
Grand Cayman, British West Indies.

Term of office

Sir,

I recently read in Robin Day's memoirs (Sorry — Sir Robin) of the concept of Butskellism. He writes that the term "was coined by THE ECONOMIST *in 1954, by merging the name of (Rab) Butler, the progressive Tory, with that of (Hugh) Gaitskell, the moderate Socialist." Could the modern trend in political thinking be described in any way, on any side, as Blajorism?*

Yours,
CAMERON PEGLEY,
Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

Please address letters for publication to Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG or e-mail to strobes@cix.compulink.co.uk (marked "For Publication"). And the Eye's WWW page is now available: http://www.intervid.co.uk/intervid/eye/gateway.html

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Yes, six inches either side of the post and that would have been a goal..."
COMMENTATOR, Radio Newcastle
(J. Hurford)

"He [Mike Tyson] will have to go into a room by himself and get used to seeing the outside world again."
FRANK BRUNO, News of the World
(J.A. Cran-Chalmers)

"He's one of those managers you'd give your left leg to play for."
COLIN COOPER, Radio 5
(Julian Thake)

"Glen Macgrath bowled so badly in his first Test, as though he'd never bowled in a Test Match before."
GEOFF BOYCOTT, Sky Sport
(S.S. Vaitlingam)

"Mixed fortunes favour the brave..."
DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Richard Gray)

"Raith Rovers have never won a major trophy during their distinguished career."
RAY STUBBS, BBC1
(Tony Kinsella)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

THE CHINA SYNDROME

WHILE elected MEPs in the European parliament huff and puff and vote away, the unelected techno-bureaucrats at the European commission continue to run their own secret foreign policy.

The commission has always refused to publish details of its debates and votes, so the 600 journalists accredited to Brussels remain largely in the dark. It has been left to a university lecturer in ancient history, Andrew Fear from Keele university, to expose a secret deal by the commission which will help China in its ethnic cleansing of Tibet.

The £5.9 million deal for the Panam integrated rural development project in Tibet is disclosed in the latest edition of the *European Journal*. The deal was struck during one of the commission's usual closed sessions favoured by former president Jacques Delors, on 9 October last year, three months before the end of his extended presidency.

A month later a similar scheme by the United Nations designed to boost cereal production was suspended for ecological reasons (as revealed in the *Observer* on 18 December). But funds for the secret commission deal miraculously appeared from its seemingly bottomless pit. The parliament, which passed resolutions in 1992 and 1993 calling for the commission to pay special attention to human rights in Tibet and to discourage Chinese immigration there, was not even informed of the deal. Very democratic.

The Panam project, which envisages the irrigation of 9,000 acres along the Nye Chu river to boost cereal production, would involve such intensive farming that experts say the land will become a desert within 10 years. Researchers, who prefer to remain anonymous, claim that the local population, who are currently self-sufficient would, become even more dependent on the Chinese economy.

In spite of stringent EC directives on fertilisers, and contrary to the traditional Tibetan method of using yak dung as natural fertiliser, Fear claims that 1,000 tonnes of artificial phosphorus fertilisers are also being provided by the EC.

No detailed environmental impact survey has been seen to be carried out by the commission. And had one been done, it would have revealed that the notoriously thin and ecologically fragile Tibetan soil would soon be destroyed and that the Tibetan religion bans the use of pesticides — and that the cereals planned would be wheat and not barley which is usually eaten by Tibetans.

Not that experienced locals would ever have been consulted on the project: one million of them have already been killed and 100,000 tortured by their Chinese overlords. This, together with forced abortion and sterilisation, and a policy of Chinese immigration, has effectively put the Tibetans in a minority whose passive Buddhist community, deprived of thousands of their monasteries, is now being policed by some 50,000 Chinese troops.

The commission has rarely revealed anything other than its own incompetence to the auditors who annually scrutinize the accounts. Endless trails of insufficiently evaluated schemes are not unusual — while the tiny think tank that made up the commission under Delors could always control whatever information it chose to impart.

Secretive Delors and his 17 commissioners always refused to publish details of the debates and votes in their weekly meetings; but they should have been carrying out directives of the council of ministers rather than making up their own foreign policy initiatives. A rash suggestion by the Danes to televise commission debates was quickly rebuffed by Delors. Hopefully the new commission president, Jacques Santer, will be more obliging.

Physicist recommends bigger balls to slow down male tennis players

Grauniad

FUNNY OLD WORLD

O "In Lhasa, I wanted to use a typical public toilet, so I went to one near the Holiday Inn. A small child directed me, intentionally I believe, to the wrong entrance, the one from where the shit is collected. I should have realised this, of course, because of his uncontrollable giggling.

"What looked to me like a brown floor turned out to be a swimming pool full of shit. I took one little step and fell in. It was really deep and I went under, swallowed several mouthfuls, and then managed to get out, completely covered in shit. I had to walk back to the Holiday Inn because I wasn't allowed on the bus, but when I walked in the staff threw me out complaining that I was covered in shit. A group of Italians outside the hotel tried to hose me down on the lawn next door. I took my clothes off and the water was extremely cold, which they thought very amusing. Eventually a very nice man smoking a pipe from the Holiday Inn sent somebody to take me inside. I felt quite embarrassed as I walked through the lobby, naked and still covered in shit.

"I went to the doctor because I was concerned that swallowing shit may not be good for your health. He gave me some medicine for worms. I had to throw away my backpack, and my money went a funny colour and stank of shit for a few days, so I had trouble spending it. Neither my passport nor student card looked very nice. I am currently trying to get new ones. I read in the Lonely Planet Guide that no one has ever fallen into a Tibetan toilet. Please correct that statement in future editions.

"Kerstin Knopf — Germany." *(Letter in Planet Talk [Lonely Planet Quarterly Newsletter], Jan-Mar 1995. Spotter — M.J Perry)*

— O —

O "What the prosecution says is technically true," lawyer Henri Janssens admitted to a court in Brasschaat, Belgium. "Before prescribing contact lenses, my client, who is a state registered optician, did indeed frequently order women to strip naked and dance around his consulting room while he played the accordian. However, there are mitigating circumstances which I ask the magistrates to take into consideration. The fact is that the defendant qualified in England where, he assures me, such techniques are commonplace."

The defendant was later acquitted. *(Portsmouth Journal Series, 23/3/95. Spotter — A. Hoad)*

— O —

O *"Welcome to the world's first menstruation museum," curator Harry Finley greeted reporters at the official opening of his private collection in Maryland. "We have over a thousand tampon and sanitary towel adverts from all over the world, some dating back as far as the 1880s, as well as a library containing several hundred specimen products, used and unused. Sure, it's not to be taken too seriously. In the cafe we're selling what look like used tampons, which we call 'Dracula's tea bags'. They're just tampons soaked in cherry juice. Kids love to suck on them, and everybody sees the joke. Although I did have one woman come into my office and slug me one, but she was wearing dangly earrings, so I guess she was one of those feminists.*

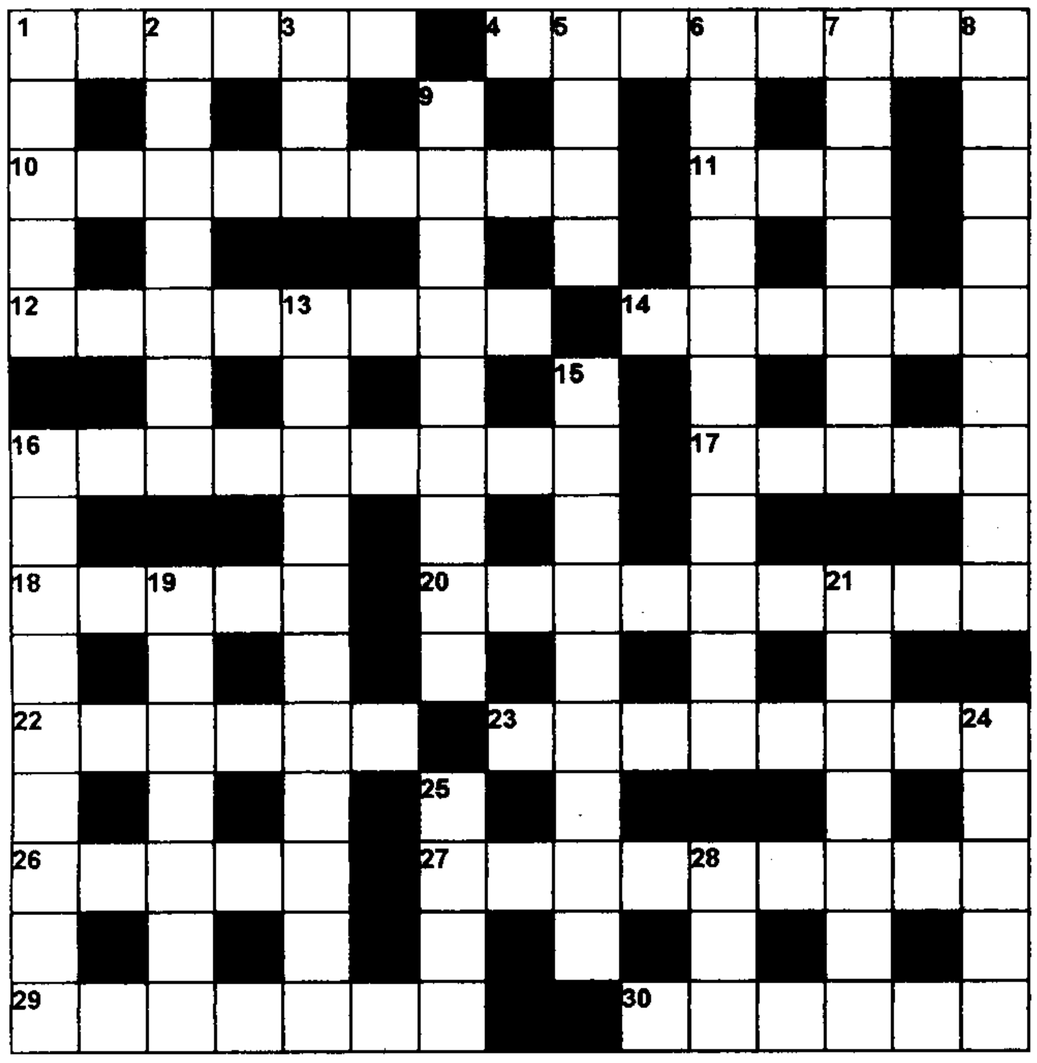
It's taken me forty years to amass the collection, which will be open to the public daily. Except, of course, for a certain time in each month, when we'll hang a red flag over the door to show we're closed. I'm having great fun. Though I'd like to know who keeps putting old kippers through my letterbox." (Western Morning News, 3/3/95. Spotter — D.Fairhead)

Compiled by

Victor Lewis-Smith

EYE CROSSWORD 27 by Cyclops

£100 Winner PATRICK MARTIN



ACROSS

1/30 Do-gooder to cosset Tory rebel (6,6)
4 Just the place for royals going downhill? (8)
10 Neat, these bent politicians gathered abroad (3,6)
11 Old-fashioned socialist? Close, we hear (3)
12/14 As desperately sought by Tory ministers groping towards the next election? (4-4,6)
14 (see 12)
16 Star who made aggressive appeals to cut off balls of Maxwell first (3,6)
17 State police beat up 22 and throw away key (5)
18 For over 40 years Brenda has left rude letters strewn about (5)
20 New sovereign (Maggie's head to replace Elizabeth's) to demonstrate bad leadership (9)
22 One who'd love to make you smart (6)
23 Airline turning to smears is declining (8)
26 Forced evacuation (5)
27 The rest of the House put on charge — such a state the country's in (9)
29 Sky going bust, having lost a lot of dollars for the old leader (7)
30 (see 1ac)

DOWN

1 "Just a minute to get it up": Forte's theme (5)
2 Familiar broadcaster Beith dithers, drops one, grabs buzzer (3,4)
3 Dick comes out every two weeks (3)
5 Eye wind up (4)
6 'Kinky Andy sandwiched between perverted American and Aussie mate' — typical of its headlines? (6,5)
7 EC later disrupted by vengeful Greek (7)
8 Brenda, Brenda, give son break! (9)
9 As the man in charge of domestic affairs, the PM has wrought doom (5-4)
13 Labour's star MP screwed gals good according to our hackette (6,5)
15 After a diet, Bienvenida makes a quick gain (1,4,4)
16 Perks a bit naff as dished out by 2's management to uncomprehending employees (9)
19 Shelves holding right books (7)
21 Erection ruined if ice remains out (7)
24 Satan screwed by seasonal deliveryman (5)
25 Gunmen needing new arms destination unknown even to Aitken? (4)
28 Spy underneath a bishop (3)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 12.05.95. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 26

ACROSS: 7 Pol Pot 8 Hastings 10 Duchess 11 Idaho 12 (See 13dn) 13 Detainee 15 The Marquesa 19 Star Trek 20 Reefer 21 Cairo 23 In power 24 Bullshit 25 Reigns

DOWN: 1 Cold war 2 Spycatcher 3 Strewn 4 Ohms 5 Visa 6 Ignored 9 Shiatsu 13/12 Derek Hatton 14 Issue a writ 16 (See 20) 17 Stuck up 18 Rear end 20/16 Rupert Murdoch 22 Idle 23 Iota.

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

Today is even more historic than a number of other days I have called historic. By a brilliant move, which not even Mr Hurd could have thought of, I have put down the rebellion over Europe. I rang up Mrs Gorman and told her that she and her friends were now members of the Conservative Party again. "What's the catch?" she said, "what do we have to do?" "You have to vote for me on all occasions" I said. "No way" she said in an angry voice. "Alright" I said, "It's a deal."

I then pulled out my "Bastards" book and crossed out all the names in a special red biro. Except Sir Richard Body who is not in the "Bastards" book because he has a special book all of his own, called "Loonies". So ends the sorry tale of the so-called "Euro-rebels".

Tuesday

The rebels are in all the newspapers saying that they are going to go on voting against me if they feel like it. I was very angry about this, as I immediately had to write all their names out again in the "Bastards" book, this time in green ink, which took a not inconsiderable amount of my valuable time. However Mr Hanley came in to say that it was good news about the rebels, because we could still blame them when we lose the council elections next week. "But we are not going to lose the elections," I said. "I saw a programme on the television last night which said we were going to do very well." "That was our party political broadcast you idiot, I mean Prime Minister" he said.

Wednesday

I was in no small measure very considerably annoyed when I read in the *Telegraph* this morning that the woman I do not mention, i.e. Mrs Thatcher, has been given the Garter by Her Majesty the Queen. "What has Mrs Thatcher ever done to deserve this?" I asked my wife Norman over our plate of McAlpen muesli-style cereal. "Well, she made you prime minister" said Norman, "even if she now realises that it was a mistake." I did not have time to argue with her about Mrs Thatcher, whose views do not bother me in the slightest, as I had to get down to Ryman's to buy a new book called "Royal Bastards" to put the Queen in.

Talking of Mrs Thatcher, which I never do, Mr Blair has again made a complete fool of himself by saying that he admired her. When I told the Cabinet about it, Mr Portfolio muttered very loudly under his breath "Well we all know why that is. Because she chose a successor he would find it so easy to beat". "I heard that" I said sternly. "You were meant to" replied Mr Portfolio.

Thursday

My brother Terry rang me at 3 o'clock this morning to say that he was in New Zealand. "You ought to be out here, John," he said, "I am the guest of honour at the Waitangi Ideal Gnome Exhibition, the biggest show of gardening ornaments ever held in the Southern Hemisphere". "Is that all you have woken me up to say?" I said. "No" said Terry, "I wanted to tell you that gnome technology is in a different universe since our day. There are these new electronic gnomes from Korea which walk around the garden singing 'Hi ho, Hi ho'. Can you imagine trying to make one of those, when you couldn't even make a cement one without getting the colour of the hat wrong". As a world leader I was not prepared to be spoken to like that by my brother in the middle of the night so I hung up.

No sooner had I got back to sleep, dreaming of the woman I never dream of being strangled with a garter, then the phone rang again. It was Terry saying he had been cut off, just as he was about to tell me about an interview he had given to the Wellington Herald about his memories of VE-Day. "You mustn't miss it" he said, "I've told the story of how you were asleep in your cot when Mr Churchill announced that we had won the war, and father rushed out to make a special Victory Gnome with two fingers raised." "I am not asleep now," I told him, "and I have got two fingers raised". "Why?" asked Terry, "when you are just about to lose the local elections" and then rang off.

Friday

Today I won yet another historic victory over Mr Blair at Question Time. He made a very silly joke about the Euro-rebels, saying that I had surrendered to them and that whereas he led his party, I only followed mine. This was so pathetic that everyone laughed at him. I immediately came back with the brilliant reply, "You are the one who has surrendered, i.e. to the men in Brussels. You are the one who has put up the white flag in the fast lane rather than driving carefully in the slow lane with a red flag in front of us to let everyone know we are coming. Oh yes". This very clever ad-lib completely silenced everyone.

Saturday

I have had an absolutely brilliant idea for celebrating VE-Day, which I read in Mr Hanley's *Daily Mirror*, which he now gets to do the crossword because he says the *Telegraph* one is too difficult. We are going to have a special two minutes silence, even in the House of Commons. "I myself will say nothing," I told Mr Hanley. "So what's new?" he asked, totally missing the point that this is a new idea which I have thought up, and which could easily win us next week's local elections.

Monday

I have had another brilliant idea to win the local elections. We are going to solve the problems of the inner cities. The way I am going to do it is to be photographed in front of some tower blocks.

"Just like Mrs Thatcher," said Mr Hanley, rather stupidly. "Not at all," I told him in no uncertain terms. "Unlike Mrs Thatcher, I actually put up the tower blocks in the first place." Oh yes.

"This is a grey, soulless wasteland," I told the newspapers, "and all the fault of the Labour councils. Except for the ones that were the fault of the Tory councils." Let Mr Blair try and wriggle out of that one!

Tuesday

I have had enough of Mr Blair. I am going to call Mr Blair's ideas "Soap powder politics dissolved in soundbites".

"This will go down well with the punters and will get you on the Nine O'Clock News," said my speechwriter Mr Morris Norris, who wrote it for me.

Sure enough, there I was on South-East News, just after the tree protesters and before the traffic update.

I am now confident that I will win the Local Elections. In 50 years' time, this will be known as "L.E. Day". Oh yes.

"It will be a historic landslide," I told my wife Norman. "And you will be at the bottom of it," she replied, showing that she is at last understanding my job.

TV HIGHLIGHTS

The Last Days of Major

Three-hour documentary charting the extraordinary final hours of the hated John Major who clings on to power in his Downing Street bunker whilst the Not Very Red Army approaches (led by Colonel Blairia). Major however refuses to accept that it is all over and still dreams of recovering the ground he has lost.

He orders in hordes of Young Conservatives and plans a new Cones offensive on the M25.

But it is too late and Major is eventually forced to commit suicide by privatising the railways.

(Only available to viewers in Scotland)

Surrender!

Core Curriculum Examination

Option 94: **THE SECOND WORLD WAR 1939-1945**

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What was the Second World War called?

a) The First World War
b) The Second World War
c) The Wars of the Roses

2. What were the dates of the 1939-45 war?

a) Take That
b) Eric Cantona
c) 1939-45

3. Who won the war?

a) McDonalds
b) Arnold Schwarzenegger
c) The women of Britain

4. Who were the opposing teams in the final?

a) West Germany vs Brazil
b) Stephen Hendry vs Jimmy White?
c) Zardac vs Monglog (© Sega Games 1994)

5. Who was Prime Minister during the war? (There are no marks for this question)

a) Adolf Hitler
b) Winston Silcott
c) Germaine Greer

Take as long as you like and don't finish if you can't be bothered.

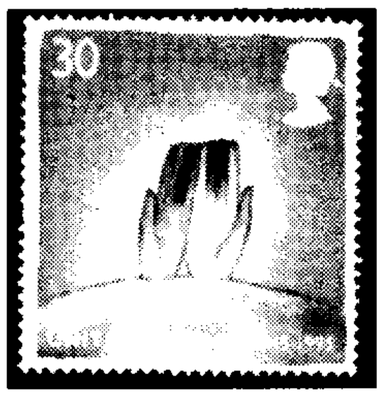
Issued to all schools by the Dept of Education

Channel 5 — What you will see

Murdoch Most Foul *(American Mini-series)*
Murdoch She Wrote *(Australian Mini-series)*
What's Up Murdoch? *(Old film)*
Rupert Takes Over The World *(Children)*
Dixon of Murdoch Green *(Repeat)*
Have We Got Any New Programmes For You (No) ***(Humour)***
(That's enough Channel 5. Ed)

ADVERTISEMENT

TO COMMEMORATE Victory in Europe, the Royal Mail is issuing a special set of stamps to commemorate the work of the United Nations.
There will be five special stamps showing:



- UN forces withdrawing from Croatia
- UN forces withdrawing from Bosnia
- UN forces withdrawing from Rwanda
- UN forces not entering Chechnya
- Boutros Boutros-Ghali enjoying a large lunch

The UN stamps are guaranteed not to stick on either side and to curl up and fall off the envelope.

Price: £2,999 for set of five

YOUR CHANCE TO JOIN IN THE 1995 COMPLETE FAILURE IN EUROPE CELEBRATIONS!

A Doctor writes

AS a doctor, I am often asked: "Why are you sticking that needle in your arm?"

The simple answer is that I am a heroin addict and have been for thirty years.

What happens is that I take this drug and have dangerous fantasies about reforming the Health Service. This is followed by an enormous feeling of power when the patient, or Doctor as he is known, feels that he can do anything — like closing down hospitals, introducing the free market into the NHS, or helping Mrs Bottomley take over the world.

In the end, the drug-crazed doctor may have to be admitted to court, where he will have to undergo a fine and a suspended sentence.

If you feel your doctor is a heroin addict you should consult Conservative Central Office at once.

© A. Doctor Froggatt

A GNOME SPECIAL VE-CD OFFER

THE SONGS THAT WON THE WAR!

Thrill again to such Wartime Wonders as

- **Ronnie Essoldo and His Essoldians:** ***"Put Another Sausage In The Oven, Mother"*** *(vocalist 'Rambling' Al Coren)*
- **Dame Rita Cadillac:** ***"There's An Apple Tree In My Heart"***
- **Ted Millie and Billy Watford:** ***"Bend Over, Adolf, And We'll Kick You Up Your Axis"***
- **Dame Gertie Mitford:** ***"Keep The Spam Fritters Burning"***
- **The Christopher Silvester Strings:** ***"Londoner's Diary"***
- **The Band of the 78th/33rd Queen's Own Squadron:** ***"The Bomber Harris March"***
- **Comic Monologue. Sidney "Put That Light Out!" Tosh:** ***"The Day I Lost My Crumpet"***
- **Stanley Gibbons and The Gibbonaires:** ***"The Winston Waltz"*** *(original Savoy Hotel recording with authentic air raid)*

Plus hundreds of others that you're glad you've forgotten.

Hurry, hurry, before interest wanes!

In The Venetian Courts

The Trial of O.J. Thello (994th day) before His Excellency Doge Cocklecarrot.

Janet Street-Portia QC

Appearing for the defendant, Miss Janet Street-Portia told the court that her client, the well-known celebrity general O.J. Thello, could not not possibly be guilty of the murder of his wife, Mrs Des D. Mona, in front of hundreds of witnesses, because he was black.

Signor Perry Masone *(for the State of Venice):* Objection, your Dogeship.

Doge: Objection overruled.

(Applause from spectator)

COMMERCIAL BREAK

Voice Over by Giovanni Wells as man in gondola sails past eating ice-cream: Just one cornetto and I get paid 50,000 ducats.

Street-Portia: Your Honour, I would like to call as my next guest in the witness box someone that everyone at home has been waiting to see. So let's have a big hand for our old friend, that Learned Doctor of the Humours of the Afflicted Mind, Professore Sigmundo Freud.

(Enter bearded Viennese [shurely 'Venetian'? Ed] psychiatrist)

Portia: Would it not be true to say that my client is totally innocent, and that the only truly guilty party is the State of Venice for its unashamedly racist policy towards its Moorish-Adriatic ethnic minority community in making my client Commander-in-Chief?

Freud: I hev examined ze case history of ze defendant and zere is no doubt in my mind zat he is suffering from being black.

(Cheers from gallery and cries of "O.J. for Doge")

Judge: Objection. It's time for another commercial break.

Voice Over *(Mr Stephen Fry, for it is he, rhymes amusingly):*

You get a better class of investor At the Shylock Bank, Venezia.

Perry Masone: Welcome back to our viewers. And it's still your witness, Ms Portia.

Portia: Do you like my new hairstyle, judge?

Judge: I thought it was a wig!

(Laughter from 80 million viewers)

CONTINUED FOR 94 YEARS

"My name is Mel Gibson and I am a congenital liar"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Sir Herbert Gusset

SIR—As the whole nation girds its loins to celebrate the defeat of the Boche 50 years ago, your readers may like to know of the preparations being made in one West Country village to commemorate the moment when this little island stood alone against the jackbooted ranks of European tyranny. Our aim is to recreate, for the benefit of the younger generation, the experience of "VE-Day 1945" exactly as it happened, minute-by-minute.

Our programme (provisional) is as follows:

8 a.m. Raising of Canadian flag over tower of St Ivel's church to show solidarity with the gallant fishermen of Newfoundland against the halibut-snatchers of Madrid and their friends in Brussels.

9 a.m: Village Hall. Day-long film show arranged by the good offices of Master Kevin Balon, the elder son of our local publican, to include selected home video recordings of *Inspector Morse Investigates*, *Dallas* and *Twin Peaks* (some episodes missing).

11 a.m: Parade of historic "war-time" vehicles round the sports field to include 1955 Hillman Imp; Hercules "Kestrel" drop-handled tourer bike c. 1951; milk float; as used by Webster's Dairy 1963-1971; Atco lawn-mower, the "Dorset Punch" (still in regular use by old Tom Duggan to mow churchyard and cricket square!)

12.00: St Ivel's Church. Grand VE-Day Service of Reconciliation. Speakers: Mrs Ulrike Choldmondeley-Ffoulkes (formerly Fraulein von Zeppelin) on "The Great Nation that is Germany". N.B. This event, suggested by Rev Dawlish, does not have the full support of the village VE-Day committee.

1 pm - midnight (approx.) Lamb and Flag public house. Re-enactment by veterans of World War II of how we survived the dark days of the Blitz, 1940-1945.

A select group of veterans take refuge in the cellar of the building until the All-Clear siren is heard. Refreshments kindly provided by mine host, Mr Montague Balon. These include such familiar "austerity beverages" as Hofmeister Extra lager and a special bottle of Auld Hirohito's 100% Genuine "Scotch" Whisky brought back from Duty-Free Singapore last year by Lt. Col. Buffy Frobisher after a visit to his son Ronald in Brisbane, Australia.

12 midnight - 8 a.m (approx.): Special VE-Day "Commemorative Silence", to be observed by all those present, broken only by peaceful snores.

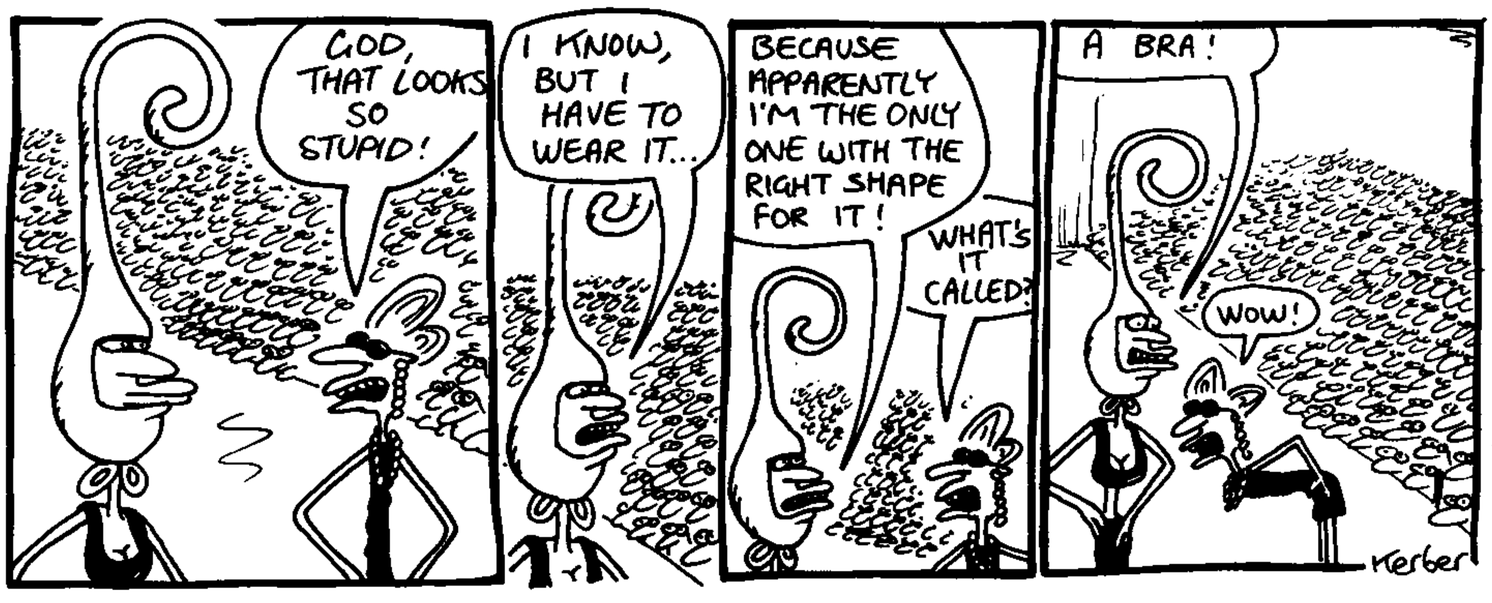
This will serve as a fitting climax to a truly unforgettable day.

I remain, sir, your obedient servant,

H. GUSSET
The Anderson Shelter,
Bernard St. Manning, Dorset.

SUPERMODELS

Neil Kerber


GOD, THAT LOOKS SO STUPID!
I KNOW, BUT I HAVE TO WEAR IT...
BECAUSE APPARENTLY I'M THE ONLY ONE WITH THE RIGHT SHAPE FOR IT!
WHAT'S IT CALLED?
A BRA!
WOW!
Kerber

FAMOUS BACK PASSAGES TOUR
Exploring an intriguing labyrinth of hidden byways. 120 mins.
Brighton Station forecourt
Suns 14, 21, 28 May 2.30pm
£3.75 under 16's £1.85

Brighton Festival Programme

Bath: Mark Bridgmen, 20, of Coniston Road, Patchway, Bristol, was fined £265 by Bath magistrates for driving with two defective tyres and defective lights, driving without an MoT certificate and using a vehicle without wings.

Bath Chronicle

VE-DAY SPECIAL

VICTORY OVER EUROPE

The Eye Remembers The Historic Moment In May 1995 When, After Five Long Months of War, The Enemy Finally Surrendered

OLD AGE pensioners danced openly in the streets, beacons were lit and church bells rang out, as the words flashed from 10 Downing Street:

"It's Over."

Appearing on the balcony of Tory Central Office, Prime Minister Winston Major gave his famous V-sign to the millions of Tory voters who had deserted him in the local elections.

"This is a historic day," he told his cheering supporters, Sid and Doris Waldegrave.

"The forces of darkness have been routed. The day of Gorman hegemony over Europe is over.

"Never in the field of Tory conflict have so many given in to so few."

The historic surrender on Lunatic Heath took place at 12.32 on 26 April.

Here is the historic document which brought to an end one of the most devastating wars in the history of the Conservative Party.

The despondent remnants of the Gorman Army acknowledge their humiliating defeat (of John Major)

THAT DOCUMENT IN FULL

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

We, the undersigned, hereby agree to surrender so long as no conditions are imposed on us, and that we are free to carry on opposing the Government as before.

Up Yours Major.

Signed

Mrs Adolf Gorman

pp The Nein (geddit?)

HE KEPT US LAUGHING THROUGH THE DARK DAYS

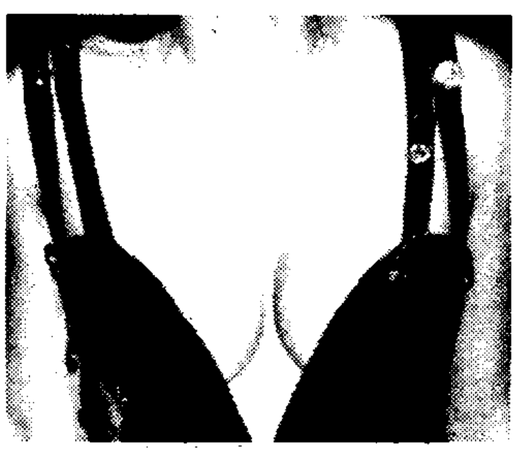
ONE man more than any other kept the nation smiling through the long years that led up to 8 May 1995.

"Cheeky Chappie" Chris Evans broadcast round the clock with his own optimistic brand of irrepressible humour.

With catch-phrases like: "Toot if you've got a big one", "Don't ring me now, missus, I'm on the toilet" and "I want another £1 million, Mr Birt, or I'll go back to the telly", Evans caught the mood of the nation.

Who could forget his brilliant, heart-warming, morale-boosting catch-phrases, such as "Toot if you've got a big one" *(Haven't we had this one before? Ed)*.

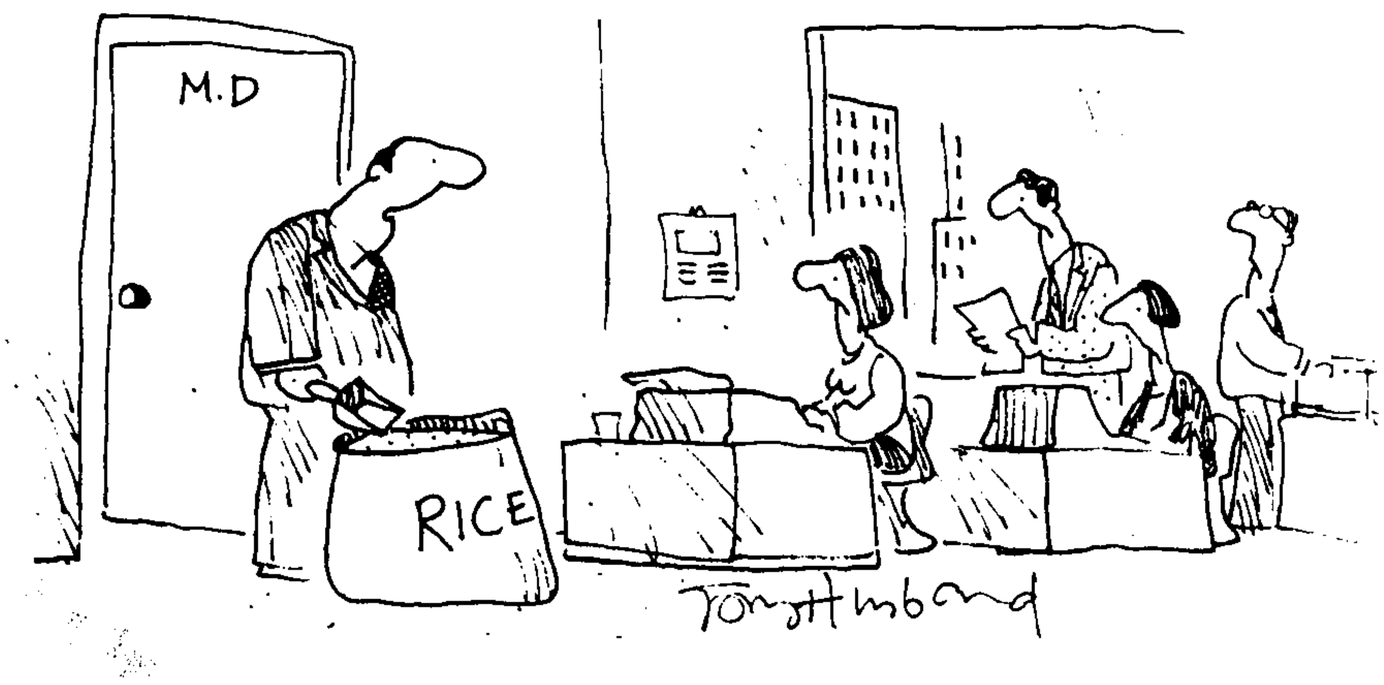
SHE WAS THE NATION'S PIN-UP



NO ONE did more for the nation's morale in the dark days of 1995 than the celebrated comic-strip heroine Liz, whose adventures appeared every day on the front page of the *Daily Telegraph*.

As one veteran World War II historian, General Sir Max Hastings, remembers: "She kept all our peckers up. In every episode her dress revealed a little more. And the whole nation was agog to see if she would ever strip off altogether."

General Hastings is 94.



"I'm afraid we can't afford wages any more, so could you queue up with a bowl..."

The letter says: "Mr Riddick continues to enjoy the confidence of us all. The privileges committee has concluded Graham had made an error of judgment in the interpretation of parliamentary rules which are not crystal clear. We express our confidence in his integrity and believe that whilst he made a momentary error, he corrected it as soon as possible and in such a way as to confirm his reputation for honesty and impropriety.

Grauniad

Modern chez longs brand new grey and white tripes, excellent condition £125 ono

Scottish SuperMart

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam: Lines On The Death Of Ginger Rogers, Aged 83

So. Farewell then
Ginger Rogers.

Famous partner of Fred
Astaire, who is also
Dead.

Tap-tap-tappity-tap.
Tap.
That is how we will
Remember you.

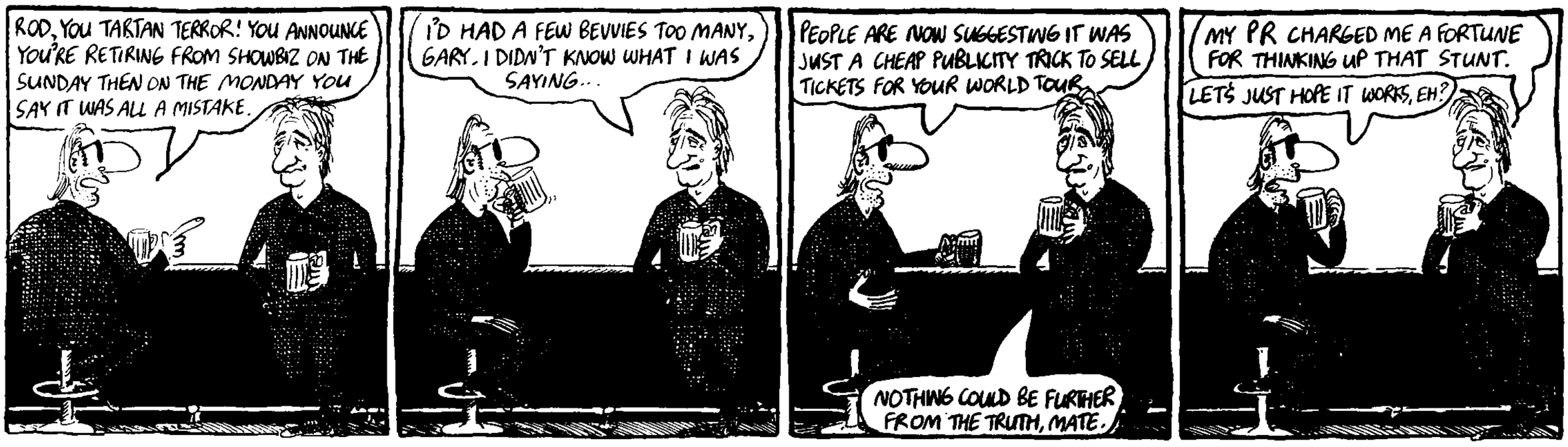
Tappity-tappity-tap-tap-tap
Tap-tap.
And so on.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Royal York
HOTEL ISLE OF WIGHT
SPRING BREAKS
3 NIGHTS from £79.00 p.p
4 NIGHTS from £97.00 p.p
To include half board, en suite & CAR FERRY (min 2) Entertainment and dancing every evening in our spacious Bathroom.
Mail on Sunday

Great Bores Of Today.

"... I've been here eight hours I don't know what these doctors do all day I haven't seen one when they called my number the nurse took my details but she hasn't been back since four o'clock and then this Asian bloke I think he was a porter took me to X-Ray but they didn't have my notes so I had to come back again then this other nurse asked me for my name and address all over again then she left me in a cubicle for three hours and there was a man in the next room who was drunk and he kept swearing and being sick the orderlies kept coming in to get the elastoplast from the cupboard behind the bed and moving my chair then they wheeled me out to make way for some kiddie who must have been in an accident or something anyway *he* got rushed through which shows they can do it if they want to then eventually a male nurse he must have been made me fill in a form about allergies and then he took my blood pressure but I didn't see him again as he went off it was the end of his shift I asked one of the cleaners what was happening but she didn't speak any English I'm actually feeling a lot better now so I won't bother them they're obviously very busy..."


ROD, YOU TARTAN TERROR! YOU ANNOUNCE YOU'RE RETIRING FROM SHOWBIZ ON THE SUNDAY THEN ON THE MONDAY YOU SAY IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE.
I'D HAD A FEW BEVVIES TOO MANY, GARY. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS SAYING...
PEOPLE ARE NOW SUGGESTING IT WAS JUST A CHEAP PUBLICITY TRICK TO SELL TICKETS FOR YOUR WORLD TOUR.
NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH, MATE.
MY PR CHARGED ME A FORTUNE FOR THINKING UP THAT STUNT.
LET'S JUST HOPE IT WORKS, EH?

GIANT LOTTERY FRAUD

Knacker fails to swoop

by Our Heritage Staff
Ben Pimlottery

THOUSANDS of police failed to swoop today on the Tory MP at the centre of a complex £12 million National Lottery scam.

The man, who cannot be named, is Winston Churchill, who has pocketed £12 million which would otherwise have gone to charities.

You Scratch My Card...

The ingenious scheme involved the senior members of the Churchill family putting it about that an unnamed American foundation was prepared to pay them millions of dollars for the late Sir Winston Churchill's priceless collection of laundry bills and bus tickets.

Mr Churchill then thought of a series of "winning numbers" — in this case 12 33 30 00 — then wrote them down and passed them to a friend (Stephen Dorrell).

The friend then paid out immediately, leaving Mr Churchill the biggest single winner since the lottery was launched last November.

I'll Scratch Yours

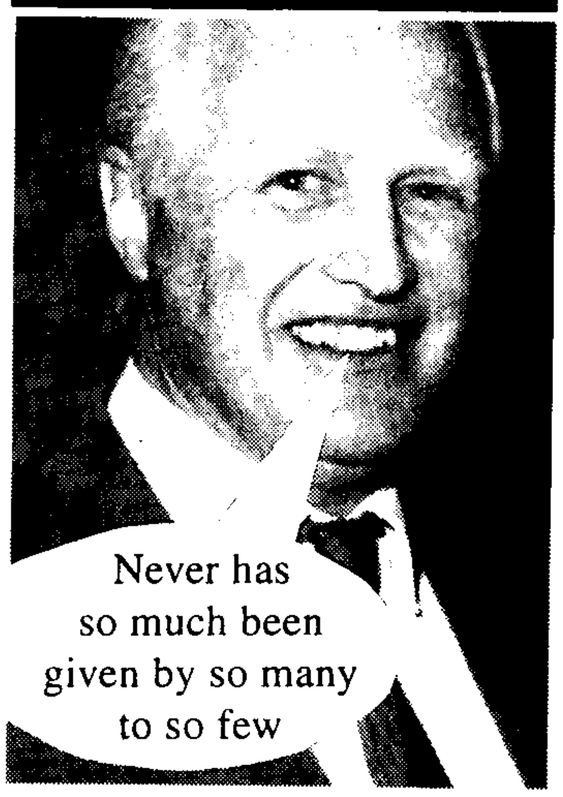
Experts were saying last night that there is only a one in 14 million chance of being Winston Churchill's grandson.

"I am delighted with this win," said Mr Churchill. "The money will not spoil me. I am a greedy, self-satisfied Tory already."

Asked whether it would not have been simpler just to give the Churchill archive to the nation, Mr Churchill said: "The problem with that would be that I would not make a huge amount of money for doing nothing. But this way, £12 million that might otherwise have been wasted on Oxfam, Save the Children, leukaemia research or other whingeing charities, has all been diverted to me and will provide much-needed alimony for many years to come."

Mr Churchill concluded: "Yes, it will change my wife."

This Week's Lucky Lottery Winner



Never has so much been given by so many to so few

BBC UNVEILS NEW SUMMER SCHEDULE

by Our Media Staff
Jane Thynne-Stuff

MR ALAN Botney, head of BBC1, and Mr Michael Jackson, the popular singer and head of BBC2, today jointly announced details of their new £2 *(shurely '£200 million'? Ed. No. J. Birt).*

Highlights include:

- **Dad's Army**
- **Tenko**
- **The News from 23 December 1961**
- **What's My Line? with Gilbert Harding and Lady Barnet**
- **Z-Cars (first 300 episodes)**
- **Pot Black 1965-73**
- **The Coronation (in full)**
- **Test Card**
- **Potter's Wheel**

Said Mr Botney: "This is a wonderful opportunity to look afresh at some of our cultural heritage of 50 years ago, in the light of recent developments — i.e. the fact that the BBC has run out of money and is about to go bankrupt."

ON OTHER PAGES

BBC to spend £400 million on new logo.

US FURY AT MAJOR'S INVITATION

by Our Outrage Staff
Lunchtime O'Klahoma

THERE WAS widespread indignation in the United States yesterday at Downing Street's announcement that the Prime Minister was to play host to the President of the Oklahoma and Michigan Far Right Anti-Federalist Militia, Mr Adam McGerard.

Downing Street defended the decision, saying that Mr McGerard and his colleagues, though guilty of mass murder, had a democratic mandate in the United States (0.0003% in the latest opinion poll).

"It is time," said a spokesman, "for dialogue and understanding rather than casting blame on people for terrorist outrages."

He continued: "The militias have a very real role to play in the future of Michigan and Oklahoma and it is only sensible for them to be included in negotiations, not to mention photo opportunities with the Prime Minister."

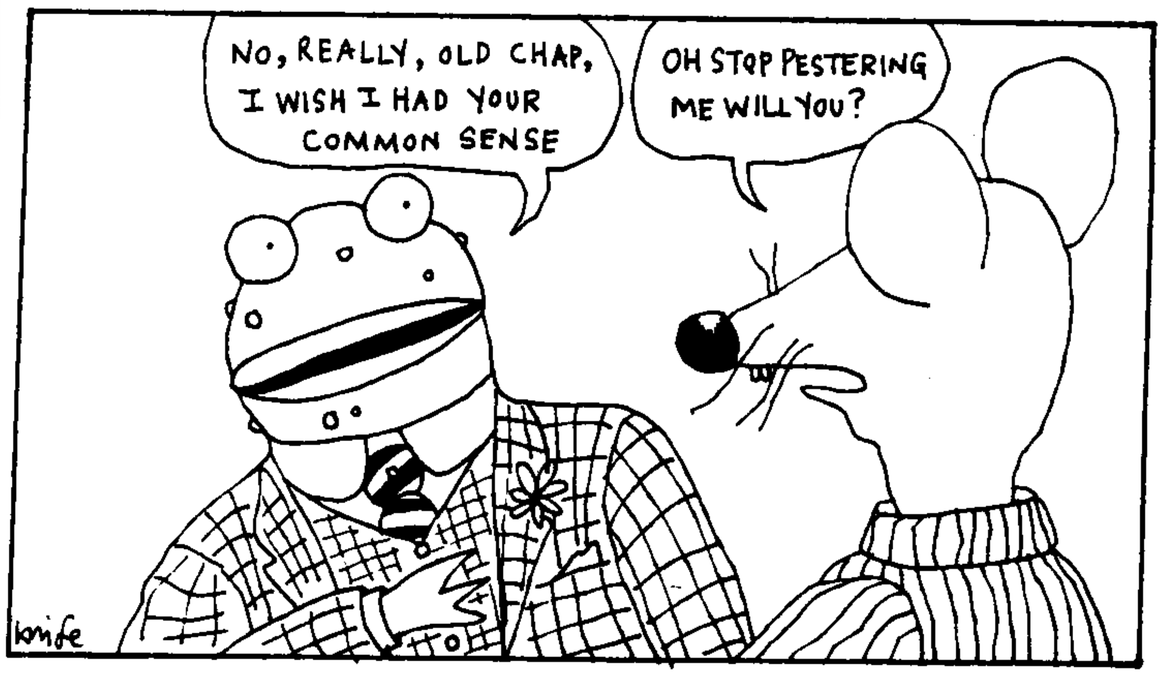
Oklahome Rule

US suggestions that Major was just trying to suck up to the extreme Right at home were discounted.

"It's not realistic," said the PM's office, "to expect the militias to decommission their weapons without some gesture of good faith by the American government.

Gun Ho

"President Clinton should issue a general amnesty for all militiamen and release the prisoners from jail at once."



RATTY & TOADY

Mellor wants chopper movements monitored

Wandsworth Borough News

LSE and the Incest Controversy: **Dr Christopher Badcock.**
Incest has been a controversial issue in the social sciences. Surprisingly large numbers of those involved in the controversy were students or staff at LSE.

LSE Centenary Programme

DIARY

Walking on my own two feet to some "telly"-connected work yesterday (my, how the restaurant at the Ritz reflects the glory of God in all its homely magnificence!) I happened to see two cars crashing in Piccadilly. My immediate feeling was one of the most intense sorrow, the scene almost unbearably poignant in the sense of wanton destruction and cruelty and waste. But then I took another look at these two cars — one a bright, beautiful red, the livid scarlet of a young man's buttocks spanked over and over again by an adoring lover in some marvellous modern art painting, perhaps by a fascinating American, the other a darker, deeper, more contemplative dusty brown, straight out of a Rembrandt self-portrait — and I realised what extraordinary shapes their smashed bodies had formed, twisted together, crushed and intertwined, rising to the heavens as if in divine supplication. It came to me in a flash that, yes, this too was another glorious example of God's joy in his own creation, and that the two cars had probably crashed for this very purpose, in order to show a humble servant of the Lord how His beauty can be found in everyday objects, if only we take the trouble to look properly!

During my luncheon at the Ritz, I was looking very deep into a bubble rising in what was only my third glass of champagne when I suddenly realised that I could see the whole world in that bubble. And within that world I could see my caravan beside the convent that has been my home now for the past twenty-five years! Given the choice between a lovely meal in a smart restaurant or a solitary salad with God in my caravan, I would have no hesitation in opting for the second. Yet here I was, trapped like a spiritual prisoner within the Ritz Hotel! But life is a constant, bubbling river of sacrifice to the Almighty. One must teach oneself, over and over again, to accept these travails as the rocky stones on the path one must tread on one's journey to the divine. So I summoned the waiter, a very nice man, almost Lowryesque with perhaps a tiny hint of Hals, and I held out my empty glass. I then asked him to bring me a little more human suffering, if he would be so kind.

After that delicious luncheon — three courses in one meal, serving to remind me that there are three persons in One God — I went

SISTER
WENDY BECKETT

to contemplate some lovely modern paintings in the Cork Street galleries. There was certainly much to admire. A large painting by Gilbert and George particularly caught my eye: two gentlemen in beautifully clean suits, standing upright like the Christian martyrs of old, between them a large, protuberant penis, yes, penis, surrounded at the bottom by lots of lovely fluffy pubic hair, like a heavenly cloud. To me, this is a painting about God's love of man, and of the joy He feels in the inner radiance of His creation. Oh, yes — and by the way: penises and pubic hair. Sorry to mention them again but my lovely kind producers from the BBC tell me that it's all for the best.

Another fabulous masterpiece by a deeply Christian — in the truest sense — young man is "More Thoughts on Mortality: Half a Chicken in Formaldehyde" by the very talented young artist Damien Hirst. It consisted of a deceased chicken cut in half and placed it in a lovely container. It struck me very forcibly indeed in its creation of a magical world of love and happiness and deep, deep spirituality. Above all, what I took from this miraculous work was an over-riding belief in the joyous reality of Christ's Birth and Resurrection, and Damien's work — sheep, cows, fish and now chickens — should be seen as a marvellous celebration of the farmyard, and in particular of that very first Christmas Day, when all the animals in the stable in Bethlehem gathered around the new-born babe to praise Him and sing of their joy to all mankind.

As luck would have it, I was fortunate enough to meet the young artist in the gallery.

"I do so admire your overwhelming feeling for what I call the inexpressible happiness and transcendental grandeur of the natural world, and the way you reveal it as all part of God's magnificent plan," I told him.

"You gonna buy it or what?" he asked sweetly.

"I have bought it a hundred times in my head," I said.

"Fat lot of good that is," he replied, thoughtfully. And this, it seems to me, is a vital message from one of our foremost young conceptualists: that the Christian path to bountiful goodness is of prime concern to the artist, today and everyday.

But it is to the Old Masters I go whenever I feel the need for the purest inspiration. Goya's paintings of war, for instance, are deeply cheering, with their glorious depiction of men ready to rejoice in their happy fate, mouths open and arms outstretched, all of them at one with God's purpose as they find themselves transported to Paradise through the divine intervention. And I find myself delighting, too, at equally joyous modern paintings such as Picasso's great 'Guernica', with its lovely blues and greys, depicting all those marvellous ordinary people, the glint of happiness in their eyes, dancing for joy as they sing praise to God Almighty, bombs be blowed! To me, it is prayer made visible.

I like to talk of pictures — including the Old Masters, bless them — in the most direct way, so that everyday people can relate to them too. For instance, I once said that one of the troubles with the Mona Lisa was that she never had to double-park outside Sainsbury's on a Friday lunchtime!! Of course, my dear friends in "telly" simply lapped this up, so then I added that Michaelangelo's 'David' wasn't quite so well-endowed as he might have been — and perhaps it would have been wiser for him to have worn a nice pair of striped boxer shorts for the sitting!! Sadly, the producer looked at me a little oddly and said that perhaps a general overview of the Renaissance might be more in order! How I long to return to the solitude of my caravan outside the convent, but I feel I must pursue God's calling to bring art into the lives of those who have not yet been touched by it. And with this hardy vocation in mind, tomorrow I am guesting on Mr Chris Evans' "Honk If You've Had It Today" slot on Wonderful Radio One, bless it.

"Let us through! We're ordinary members of the public with floral tributes".

The red kite, part of a breeding programme to reintroduce the endangered species to the UK, is recovering at London Zoo after being found dead from shotgun pellets near Watlington in Oxfordshire.

Bucks Examiner

Court News

Maggot bit policewoman

Whitehaven News

Literary Review

King Nodong

Tom Clancy's Op-Centre
Created by Tom Clancy & Steve Pieczenik
(HarperCollins, £4.99)

SOME people think a famous writer is one who has won the Booker. Others reckon a famous writer is one whose books have been on television. *Really* famous is a writer who doesn't even have to write his own books any more. Tom Clancy, for example.

Tom Clancy hasn't had to tire himself out actually writing this book — he's just authorised it. So it's *Tom Clancy's Op-Centre*, as it might be Paul Newman's Vinaigrette.

HarperCollins betrays some uneasiness about this new diffusion line. On the back of the book it has written in large letters "AN ALL-NEW, ORIGINAL NOVEL". It's like a burger chain claiming that its products are 100 percent meat, tactfully omitting to mention that it's all been "mechanically recovered" — ie decocted from a noxious slurry of bits nobody in his right mind would want to touch, let alone ingest.

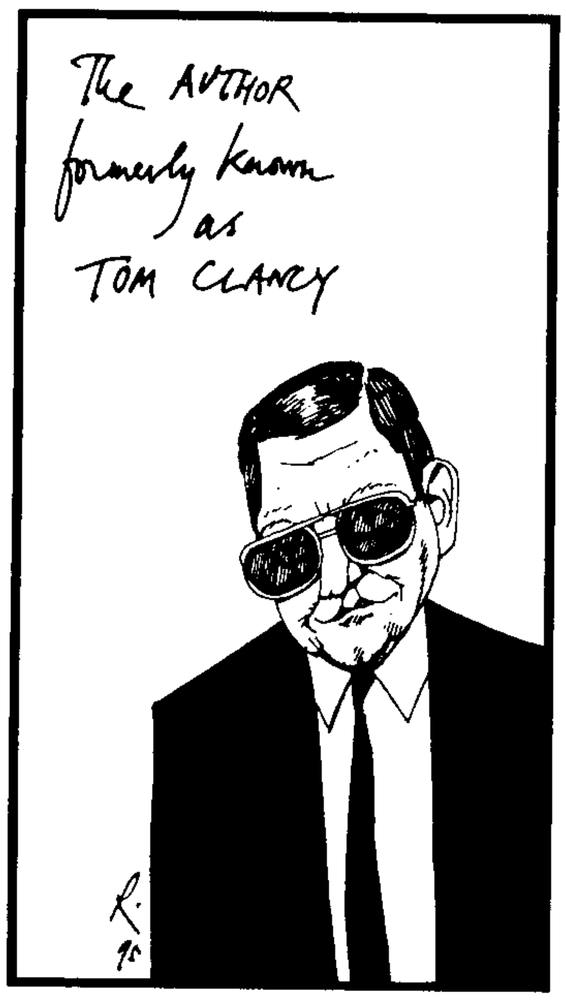
HarperCollins needn't have worried though. *Tom Clancy's Op-Centre* is already second only to John Grisham in the bestseller lists, smoothly succeeding his previous hits such as *The Hunt For Red October* and *Patriot Games*. The sorry berks who buy this kind of stuff probably prefer their books not to have anything so lifelike as an author anyway.

For Tom Clancy is the troubadour of the techno-nerds. He loves weapons, yes: his wife once bought him a real tank to play with, as a present. But he adores computers and all other gadgets, too. Basically there's nothing he likes better than a good specification to swap. Give him an acronym and he's as happy as a sandboy.

The incredibly thin plotline this time is that an American president has set up a special secret super hi-tech state of the art top of the range unit Center, by the way, guys. Then lo! it has to go into action. Over in Korea, some naughty South Korean generals have tried to provoke a war with North Korea by secretly committing terrorist outrages and blaming the enemy. Naughty, naughty, *naughty*!

Only the jolly old Op-Center with its whizzo computers and spiffy satellites can prevent the whole region going up in flames. Happily, the jolly old Op-Center manages to do just that in the nick of time, and the American president is as pleased as Punch. Yes, techno-nerds have saved the world again! We just don't know how lucky we are.

This paltry rubbish exists merely as a pretext for enumerating all the dreary details of the appliances. For a normal person, it's about as exciting as studying the manuals to your immersion heater. Every single bit of hardware is laboriously



catalogued: "First introduced in 1982, the Lockheed C-141B Starlifter, with its 159-foot 11-inch top-mounted wings, was heir to the laurels of the earlier C141A, introduced in 1964... At 168 feet 4 inches in length, the C141B — longer than its predecessor by 23 feet 4 inches — could accommodate 154 troops, 123 paratroops, 80 stretchers, and 16 sitting casualties or cargo. Flight refuelling equipment located in the back added 50 per cent to its normal range of 4,080 miles — longer, if like now, it was carrying less than its 70,847 pound payload..."

Had enough, have you? Like me to stop, would you? Are you sure? Because there's plenty more where that came from. "The Lockheed F-117A Nighthawk had an RCS of .01..." No, no, all right, submission accepted.

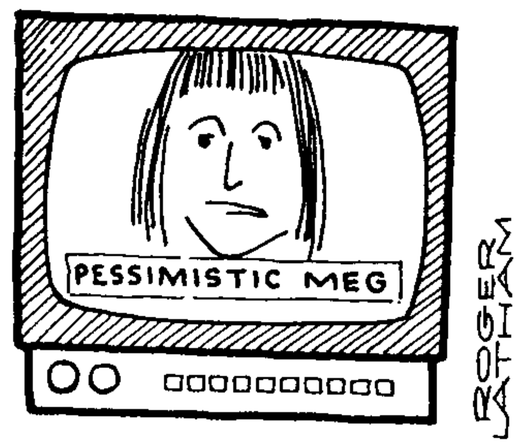
It's not as though the authors are only interested in militaria either. You get radios, you get cameras, you get the specs of *acoustic tiling*, for God's sake. Even a boring old laptop is slaveringly described: "Squires was carrying a Toshiba Satellite portable computer with a specially designed sidemounted laserjet printer..." Cor! Can I have a go, can I, *can I*?

Sadly the writers' interests don't extend to words, or so one must assume from the extraordinary misadventures they have suffered among them. For example, the mainspring of the plot is that the wicked terrorists are going to commandeer some North Korean missiles and launch them at Japan. By some appalling mishap, these missiles, supposed to be adapted Scuds, are called Nodongs.

Yes, Nodongs. "With a payload of seventy-five pounds of high explosives, the Nodong could fly nearly six hundred miles... "

In the last lines of the book, the triumphant Op-Center boss refuses a lunch invitation from the grateful president, explaining: "I'm going to be taking tomorrow off so I can teach my son how to play chess and read a few violent comic books with him."

What violent comic books can he be thinking of? Not Tom Clancy's, surely? Because they're just too embarrassing. After all, so much compensatory missile-flourishing can suggest only one thing — that secretly, just like all his readers, the poor guy's a bit of a Nodong himself.



"I predict that millions of you will never, ever, win anything at all – especially you"

Books & Bookmen

■ AS REPORTED in *Eye* 861 Carole Morin, the author of one novel, was appointed to the University of East Anglia's writing fellowship, a £5,000 per semester part-time job funded by Eastern Arts, in preference to great writers such as Tibor Fischer, Sarah Maguire and John Burnside.

The Eastern Arts literature officer responsible — who coincidentally was an interviewer for the job — was of course Don Watson, who doubles up as Carole Morin's real life husband.

UEA staff have been surprised to find that Mr Watson has now moved into the on-campus accommodation provided, free of charge by the university and Eastern Arts, to his wife. He now uses it as his base, availing himself of the UEA telephone and services. So pleased are the couple with this arrangement that they have let their London flat for a healthy rent.

Part of Mrs Watson's responsibilities is to advise and provide tutorials for students on the MA course in creative writing. At the time of writing she hadn't yet found time to attend any of their classes, and no student had yet claimed to have met her.

□ POETS Anthony Thwaite, Alan Brownjohn, Fiona Pitt-Smutbag and the others (including Lady Magnesia's sister) dumped by Reed's new trade books boss, Sandy Grant, are complaining that it's no surprise Grant has behaved as he has — cancelling their contracts, signed and unsigned — because he's an Australian and therefore a philistine.

What no one has pointed out to the sulks is that Grant cares more about poetry than anyone else at Michelin House. His brother is a poet and he published Australia's finest living poet, Les Murray. He just thinks the Sinclair-Stevenson poetry list is a load of horse manure.

■ **ONE of the Bloomsbury Grope signatories of the letter to the *Times* griping that the Lord Gowrie, chairman of the Arts Council, had sacked the saintly Michael Holroyd from his position as chairman of the council's advisory panel on literature was the loyal Mrs Holroyd, under her maiden name of Margaret Drabble. The new chairman of the panel is none other than the poet Grey Gowrie.**

What has not been noised abroad is that literature (at which we're supposed to be so good, blah, blah, blah) will now lack a voice on the council itself. Hitherto the chairperson of the literature panel has been a member of the Arts Council and able to speak up for writing as opposed to singing, dancing or lurching through East Anglia on a pogo stick.

'Bookworm'

REMAINDERS OF THE DAY

Book: *Crossing The Threshold Of Hope* by His Holiness John Paul II, published by Cape in 1994.

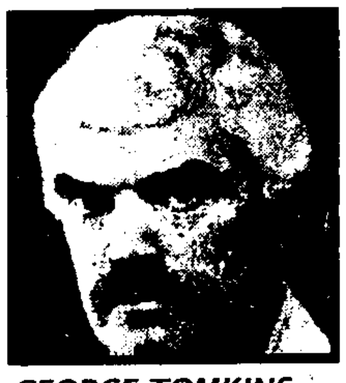
Advance: English language rights alone bought for £5.7 million.

Original price: £9.99.

Now: £3.99.

Spotted: Book Bargains.

footnotes



GEORGE TOMKINS

TROUBLE AT T'MILLS

MILLS: "It's my case and I'm dropping it"

BEFORE anyone rejoices at the early success of the private prosecution of four men for the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, they should remember the fate of another private prosecution — the shocking story of George Tomkins.

Tomkins accuses Barbara Mills, director of public prosecutions, of "perverting the course of justice to protect her department". He was arrested in 1983 and charged with an armed robbery in Leamington. He had a cast-iron alibi. At the time of the robbery he was in Liverpool with his probation officer. Yet he was still locked up on remand for 526 days.

Tomkins has a rare blood disease which inflames his skin. The prison authorities wouldn't let him out to a hospital. So he lay in pain in his cell for 17 months until his case came to court in October 1984. He was unanimously cleared by the jury, who told him they were convinced at once of his innocence.

A month before Tomkins's arrest, Joseph Griffin had been identified as one of the robbers by a security guard. Griffin was white — so is George Tomkins. There was only one white robber involved. Tapes of telephone conversations between Griffin and a senior detective in Birmingham suggested that the police knew Griffin was guilty, and sought to frame George Tomkins in his place.

After his release Tomkins devoted his life to exposing what he regarded as the conspiracy against him. When West Yorkshire police investigated the discredited and disbanded West Midlands serious crimes squad, he showered the investigating officers with documents about his case. The inquiry report went to the crown prosecution service (CPS), which in 1992 decided there was "insufficient evidence" to prosecute.

Angry but persistent, George Tomkins launched a private prosecution at his own expense against four Birmingham policemen and a former officer of West Midlands CPS.

The case against the CPS official was dismissed early on. But last November, after innumerable delays and difficulties, the case against the four police officers came to Birmingham magistrates court. After hearing evidence and witnesses for three days, the stipendiary magistrate found there was a case to answer. The four men — former Det Supt Stan Beechey, who rose to be deputy head of the serious crimes squad; former Det Insp Terence Mills; and two serving officers: Det Sgt John Barker and Det Chief Inspector Ernie Robinson — were sent for trial at Birmingham crown court charged with conspiring to pervert the course of justice.

George Tomkins was delighted. He thought that at last his suspicions about the robberies and the grass Griffin would be tested at a full criminal trial. But he reckoned without Mrs Barbara Mills. In February of this year, after an urgent approach from the police officers' solicitors, Mrs Mills blandly announced that she was "taking over" the case.

The Liberal peer Lord Avebury, who has followed the Tomkins case with mounting indignation for 11 years, was outraged. He wrote to Mrs Mills: "You have an interest in the failure of the proceedings. If the case against the officers were to be successful, it would raise serious questions about the conduct of your predecessors, who failed to act against the defendants when all the same evidence was available to them. Of course I'm not saying you would deliberately throw the case; merely that in principle it is wrong for you to be involved in a matter which concerned you so directly."

In reply to Avebury Mrs Mills wrote: "I must emphatically reject your suggestion that the CPS 'has an interest in' the failure of the proceedings." A few weeks later, without a press release, Mrs Mills sent her top barrister Jeremy Roberts QC to Birmingham crown court to offer no evidence in the case — and the four police officers walked free.

The *Eye* asked the DPP's office how she could possibly justify dropping a case which involved the partiality of her own department and which a magistrate had sent for trial. "It's a different test," replied a spokesman. "The magistrate decides whether there is a prima facie case — we decide if there is sufficient evidence to lead to a realistic prospect of conviction." The spokesman "emphatically" denied that the DPP had an interest in the case. George Tomkins does not believe a word of it. He is applying for a judicial review of Mrs Mills's decision.

DOOMREAY

■ ENERGY minister Tim Eggar and his advisers are anxiously hoping that the recent revelations about massive radiation leaks at Dounreay in the north of Scotland are confined, as they have been up to now, to the Scottish newspapers, led by the *John O'Groat Journal*

On 7 April the *Journal* exposed a confidential report by RM consultants, revealing that drums of radioactive waste from all over the country had been dumped down an unlined shaft near the Dounreay nuclear reactor, and that some were leaking. The *Journal* linked the revelations to "hot spots" of dangerously high levels of radiation in the local landscape and seashore.

The consultants say that if the waste isn't removed, it will poison the environment for thousands of years. To remove it, however, would cost at least £200 million.

In normal circumstances there would be no choice: the clean-up would go ahead. But the government is pinning its hopes for tax cuts at the next election on the privatisation of the nuclear industry. "Unnecessary" spending will be discouraged.

Two other facts may be relevant:

1. The population round Dounreay is very small and very far away. This is why the reactor was put there in the first place.

2. Caithess and Sutherland, Dounreay's constituency, hasn't returned a Tory for 30 years.

Pyle up

■ PRIVATE Graham Pyle, who went absent without leave after being locked up in solitary confinement for 101 days on charges which were later dropped (see *Eye* 24 March), came up on court martial in Belfast last month.

The prosecuting officer asked the court for a further sentence of six months in prison — a day's jail for every day he went absent. The court disagreed. Graham Pyle was discharged — which is what he wanted — and he has left the army in some disgust.

Oh yes John, yes John, yes John, yes!

■ INFORMATION technology expert John Chisholm was chief executive of the French-owned SEMA group when he left in 1991 for a new job as chief executive of the government's Defence Research Agency.

A few months later, the agency tendered for a firm to help with a new accounting system described as "one of the largest integrated accounting systems operating in the UK". Three firms bid. The lucky winner which immediately got an order worth £1.2 million and was paid £700,000 of taxpayers' money in 1993 and 1994 was... SEMA.

How did the chief executive's former firm win the contract? An agency spokeswoman explained: "John came in, looked at the accounting system and said: 'I need to make some changes to this system because what we have got hasn't got all I need . I can tell you from my position as a captain of industry — it ain't what we need to run the DRA. So we need some help to sort it out.' So then, obviously, we go out to the market place to find out who's there who can help us."

SEMA was there. The spokeswoman insisted that John Chisholm had absolutely nothing to do with the choice of SEMA, and points out that SEMA had released him on the strict condition "that they wouldn't be penalised in terms of not being invited to bid for ministry contracts just because their chief executive had become chief executive of the agency".

JOHN CHISHOLM

STOY HAYWIRE

COME FLY WITH STOY: Adrian Martin, senior partner at Stoy Hayward and his favourite form of transport

THE 13,000 members of the Royal Automobile Club are reeling from a circular letter sent to them by BDO Stoy Hayward, the ambitious London accounting firm.

Stoy Hayward have been sacked as the club's auditor and be replaced by Price Waterhouse. The RAC bases its argument on the laws of the free market, pointing out that the Price Waterhouse bid was almost half Stoy Hayward's.

Stoy Hayward replies that Price Waterhouse is treating the RAC audit as a "loss leader". This sort of thing, whines the circular, "raises a number of issues which bring into question the ability of any firm of appointed auditors to be truly independent and objective".

No auditor on earth knows more about independence and objectivity than Stoy Hayward. For instance, Sock Shop was once a client of Stoy Hayward and Peter Moss was the auditor. In December 1987 Peter Moss left Stoy Hayward to become corporate development director of, er, Sock Shop, a job to which he devoted himself with such enthusiasm Sock Shop went into receivership three years later.

Mr Moss was sharply criticised in the DTI report on the arms company Astra which was also a client of Stoy Hayward before the firm was sacked and replaced by Price Waterhouse. Paragraph 6.171 declared: "We consider that Stoy Hayward must bear part of the responsibility for the fact that Astra's 1987 accounts did not show a true and fair view."

Touche Ross, the administrator of Polly Peck, is suing Polly Peck's auditor for £350 million. The auditor was Stoy Hayward — not universally renowned for its independence from Polly Peck's glamorous proprietor, Asil Nadir, nor for its objectivity about him.

Perhaps the best example of Stoy Hayward's devotion to independence and objectivity was the auditing of the accounts of the group of firms headed by Roger Levitt, the celebrities' thief. Stoy Hayward was so impressed by Mr Levitt's ability to make money at a rather higher rate than was normally available in the market that it recommended his services to other audit clients. A Stoy Hayward letter announced "the highest regard for the professionalism, business approach and integrity" of the crooked Levitt group and its directors.

In case any sceptical RAC member believes the *Eye* is passing on this information on behalf of Price Waterhouse, it is worth recalling PW's own auditing triumphs on behalf of the most fraudulent bank in history, BCCI — for which Price Waterhouse is being sued for a few billions.

In fact all six top accountancy firms are being sued for damages relating to the spectacular receiverships of modern times. Many of the sums stated in the writs are higher than the "cap" imposed by the defendants' insurers. So if all the writs are successful, there's a delightful possibility that all the top accountancy firms will simply vanish...

Lockerbie: STEWART'S ENQUIRY

■ **THE LEADERS of New Labour have turned down an opportunity to defeat the government in the House of Commons on a momentous issue: the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.**

The opportunity came from an unusual quarter: Tory MP Allan Stewart, who until February of this year was a Scottish junior minister. On 7 February he confronted a demonstration against a motorway in his constituency. At one stage he picked up a pickaxe which had been left by the roadside. He did not attack anyone, but his behaviour was considered demeaning for a minister and he resigned from the government.

Out of office, Stewart decided to clear up a matter he had found awkward while a minister. For some years he had been approached by constituents worried by the government's sanctions against Libya. Ministers insist the sanctions must continue until two Libyan suspects for the bombing are brought to trial in Scotland. The Libyan government won't release the suspects for trial in such an obviously hostile environment.

Allan Stewart proposed a compromise: a trial of the Libyans under a Scottish judge and a Scottish jury somewhere outside Scotland. On 2 April he issued a press release announcing that he was going to Libya to put his compromise to the government there. Five days later, on 7 April, two months after the incident on the motorway, he was suddenly and unexpectedly charged — in a hand-delivered letter — with committing a breach of the peace at the demonstration two months earlier. He had not been arrested or cautioned.

On 9 April Stewart, accompanied by Tufail Shaheen MBE, president of the Islamic Council of Scotland, went to Libya. He had a long interview with President Gadaffi. Stewart tells the *Eye*: "Gadaffi had obviously thought about it very carefully and agreed with 90 per cent of what I proposed. I also saw the lawyers for the suspects. They were obviously less enthusiastic, but of course if the Libyan government wants to release the two men they can change the law to do so."

AXED: Allan Stewart

Soon after his return, Stewart moved an amendment to the Scottish criminal justice bill, which was going through committee in the Commons, to enable a Scottish judge and jury to sit in a foreign country. The Scottish committee has 10 government supporters and nine opponents. Stewart's vote and those of the opposition members would win.

When Stewart moved his amendment on 20 April, John McFall, a Labour front bencher, spoke strongly against. "What would happen if jurors absconded?" he asked; and: "Is there something wrong with the air in Edinburgh?"

Where did McFall get his legal advice? One likely adviser is Andrew Hardie QC, hotly tipped as lord advocate in the next Labour government. Hardie was number two in the government team at the 1990 fatal accident inquiry into the Lockerbie disaster.

In the event, Tam Dalyell was the only Labour MP to support Stewart's amendment. Shortly before the debate he received through the post some "briefing notes" on Stewart written in the crown office, the government's law department in Scotland. Dalyell believes they were sent to him by a civil servant who was shocked by the official smear campaign against Stewart — one document referred to Stewart's "strong associations with the Asian business community" and his "keen interest in the effect of sanctions on business with Libya" — references which Stewart himself interprets as smearing him with acting out of commercial interest. "In fact I have no commercial interest at all in this," he tells the *Eye*.

With no support, except from Dalyell, Stewart withdrew his amendment. A rare opportunity to beat the government in committee and bring the Lockerbie issue to the floor of the House of Commons, had been lost. The biggest mass murder in British history therefore remains unsolved. The impasse, vital to the continuing cover-up, remains. It has been maintained by the government only with Labour support, and by smearing and hounding one of their most loyal supporters.

49: Time for the P45

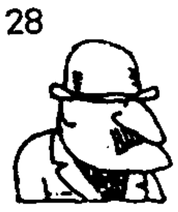
■ NIGEL Allen, 49, was sacked after 27 years' unblemished service as a hospital estates officer, because his hospital trust didn't want to pay his pension when he was 50.

He made such a fuss that the trust — at the Royal Free Hospital in London — kept him on in a lower grade job. But the trust habit of sacking 49-year-olds has caught on.

In 1991 responsibility for the pensions of workers over 50 was transferred from the central National Health Service to the local trusts.The NHS director of human resources, Ken Jarrold, warned the trusts not to sack people because they were 49. "Think of yourselves in that position," he said, predicting that such sackings would have "a massive impact on staff morale".

None of this cut any ice with the new "realistic" management of the trusts. Ray Rowden, director of the Institute of Health Management, tells the *Eye*: "I have a cast list of dozens of people treated in this despicable way: all sacked at 49 to save the trusts the pension money."

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG, or leave a message for him on 0171 287 3183



In the City

THE long expected demise of hotel group Buckingham International, finally forced into administration by its £60 million-plus borrowings and the pressure of other multi-million debts, is a glaring example of the dangers of investing in a public company dominated by directors with substantial private interests.

From the moment that father and son duo Nurdin and "Nick" Jivraj replaced Tim Aitken, cousin of Jonathan, at the then Leisuretime International in early 1988, they fed the company a rich diet of their private interests. In the process, offshore Jivraj family trusts and companies in Jersey, Switzerland and the Netherlands Antilles swapped highly priced assets and debt for cash and Buckingham shares in a tax free haven.

Unfortunately for Buckingham shareholders, the timing of these investments turned out to be less than propitious. It acquired the Jivraj private hotel interests in Florida and then Portugal just before the property and tourism markets in both collapsed.

By the time the music had stopped four years later, Buckingham shares had fallen from almost 100p to a few pennies, and the once highly valued assets had shrunk to fit. But in the process the company had handed over £61 million, all but £4 million in cash, to the Jivraj interests offshore.

It must be said that, apart from the banks, the Jivraj interests have been the major losers from the Buckingham debacle. They invested at least £43 million in acquiring a 60 percent share stake. But they would still seem to have ended up to £14 million in cash better off. And of course they no longer hold the assets which have proved so optimistically valued.

Nurdin and Nick began as they intended to go on. Their first deal in 1988 saw the purchase of Country Care, a chain of nursing homes, from their private interests for £4 million. On this occasion the consideration was taken in shares at 74p, a course not to be repeated in later deals. But then Country Care gave the Jivrajes a controlling stake of just under 30 percent and put Nurdin and Nick in charge of the boardroom with the support of their long time ally, chairman Sir David Hardy.

The next move came a year later in February 1989 when Buckingham paid $24.88 million (£14.14 million) for two hotels and a development in Florida. The deal saw Buckingham also take over loans from the family's Jersey company, Naaz Holdings, to the hotel companies of at least $3 million. Naaz invested £3.85 million of its cash in more Buckingham shares at 83p. Naaz had already spent a further £5 million subscribing for its share of a 1988 rights issue at 75p to maintain its controlling stake.

Then in March 1990 Buckingham paid £42.3 million for a batch of hotels and developments in Portugal. This was a very good deal as the private offshore Jivraj interests had invested £27.7 million plus unspecified fees to acquire these interests in the previous three years. The largest parts of the Portuguese package were the Holiday Inn, Lisbon, valued at £17.3 million, and the Clima Sol development outside Estoril valued at almost £10 million.

But once again Naaz showed its faith in Nurdin and Nick by reinvesting more than £14.5 million in taking up new shares issued to finance the deal.

Sadly the property market in Portugal was about to follow that in Florida into a steep downward spiral from which it has not yet recovered. The recession followed by the Gulf War blew major holes in the hotel markets in both the US and Portugal. Within a year the Buckingham share price had halved to nearly 40p. Another year and the price was below 10p.

So in June 1992 Naaz rode to the rescue by playing a major part in a £30 million refinancing. It subscribed £18 million for loan stock and share units having already increased its shareholding.

By 1993 with no end in sight to Buckingham's problems and encouraged by the Takeover Panel, after their overall stake had crept above the 30 percent trigger level, the offshore Jivraj interests offered to buy out the remaining shareholders. Even at 2.75p the rush for the exit was such that the Jivraj interests ended up with almost 60 percent of the company after the expenditure of a further £700,000.

But by then the banks, owed almost £100 million on security worth nothing like that figure, had had enough. The Jivrajes were pushed aside and removed from executive roles. A process of asset sales was introduced. Now it emerged that the assets in Portugal were more like liabilities. The Holiday Inn, once valued at £20.4 million, was sold last year for £9.6 million, almost half what it cost. The Clima Sol development was sold back to the Jivrajes, the only buyers, for £400,000 plus the assumption of debt — a loss of at least £8 million.

But while Portugal has been a multi, multi-million vale of tears for Buckingham shareholders it has been a nice little earner for Naaz on top of the up to £28 million net it received from the public company in 1990. Naaz and other Jivraj-related interests continued to receive substantial sums from Buckingham in return for services rendered in Portugal.

A local company controlled by Naaz was paid £3.8 million between 1991 and 1993 for construction work. The company holds a £7.8 million contract for work on Clima Sol.

Then there were the services provided by Naaz employees to Buckingham in Portugal. These totted up to £1.1 million in the three years after the sale. On top of that, Buckingham owed £268,000 to Naaz for work on refurbishing one of the hotels of which at least £80,000 has been paid.

All of these deals were approved by the Buckingham board. Tory MP and now junior foreign office minister David Davis was a non-executive director when the Portugal deal was done. The Jivrajes did not vote on these deals, which were supported by the company's advisers County NatWest and Robert Fleming, and accepted by the stock exchange. Full details were disclosed to shareholders. Yet few, it can be assumed, perhaps realised the full extent to which the public company was enriching the private Jivraj interests year after year.

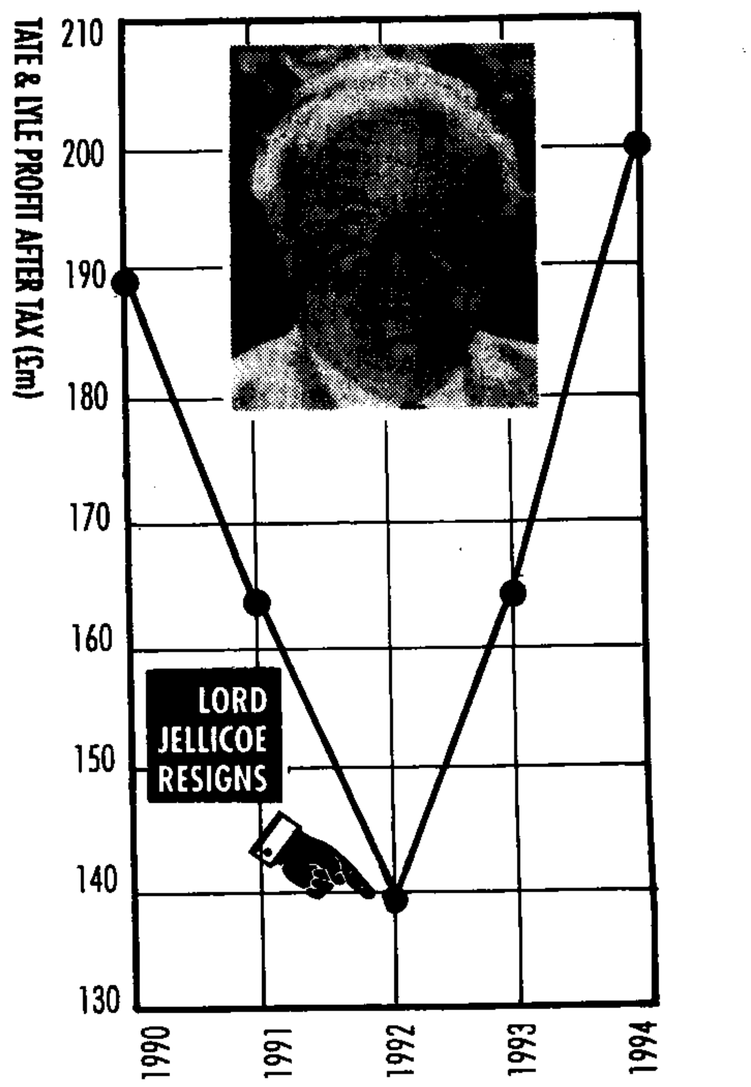
The Jivraj camp suggests that the stock exchange insisted that it sell to Buckingham its private hotel interests because of the obvious conflict of interest. But just how short were the arm's length of these deals, given the Jivraj domination of the company, is open to question, especially given subsequent events. It is hardly encouraging that Buckingham's last accounts admitted that contrary to the Cadbury Code there was no procedure for independent directors to take independent advice. This was just one of several breaches of the rules for corporate governance.

Those shareholders who did not vote with their feet have now been wiped out. The banks too are likely to take a substantial hit. Even the Jivrajes have waved goodbye to an investment that cost them at least £43 million. But most if not all of that was paid effectively with Buckingham's own money. And at the end of the day those offshore trusts in Jersey and Switzerland would seem to have still come out ahead.

THE MAN now wielding the scimitar of truth, Sheikh Jonathan Al-Aitken bin Fahd, will insist on cutting himself when he is asked about his innumerable relationships and business deals with the sons of the desert. Perhaps the world would be a little more sympathetic if he would explain exactly what he received for all those years of faithful service while a director of Al-Bilad UK and a myriad other companies owned by the Saudi princes and their bagmen. After all, as a busy backbench MP it was remarkably generous of him to devote so much time to these companies year after year without a smidge of remuneration.

'Slicker'

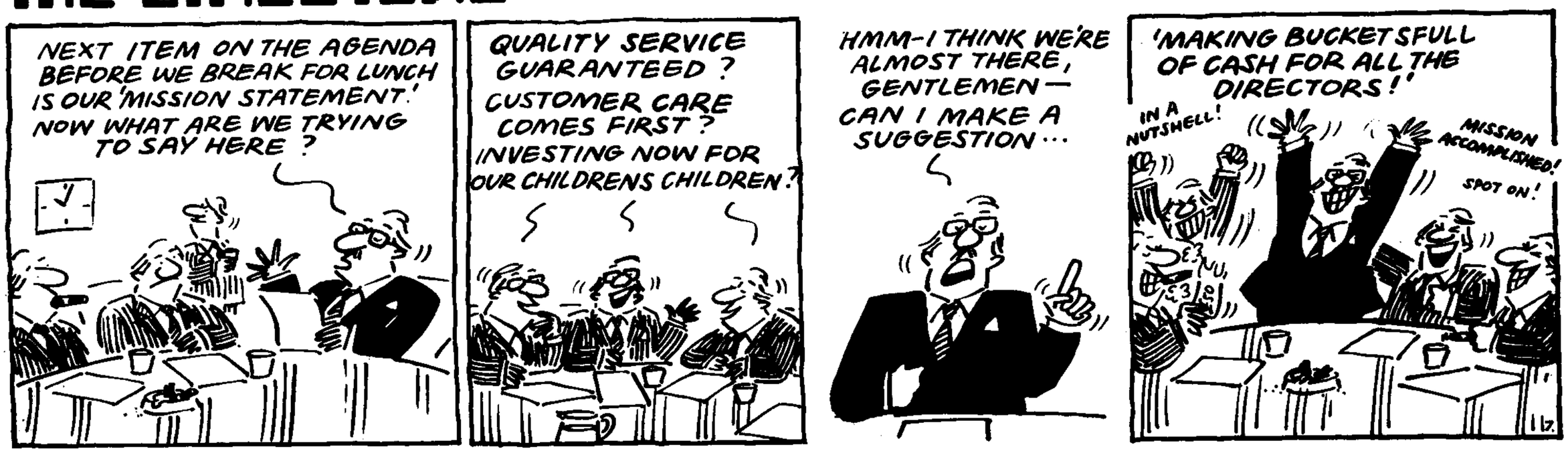
British Management Part 17.
LORD JELLICOE, former Minister of Defence, Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal. Director Tate & Lyle until 1992.



Tate & Lyle Profit after tax			
1990	£189.3m	1992	£139.2m
1991	£166.0m	1993	£167.5m
		1994	£200.1m

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE


NEXT ITEM ON THE AGENDA BEFORE WE BREAK FOR LUNCH IS OUR 'MISSION STATEMENT.' NOW WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO SAY HERE ?
QUALITY SERVICE GUARANTEED ? CUSTOMER CARE COMES FIRST ? INVESTING NOW FOR OUR CHILDRENS CHILDREN ?
HMM-I THINK WE'RE ALMOST THERE, GENTLEMEN— CAN I MAKE A SUGGESTION ...
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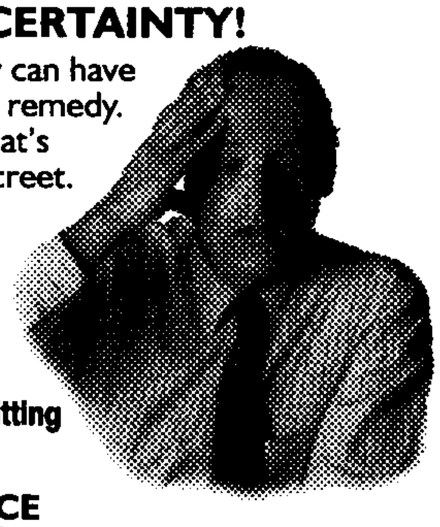

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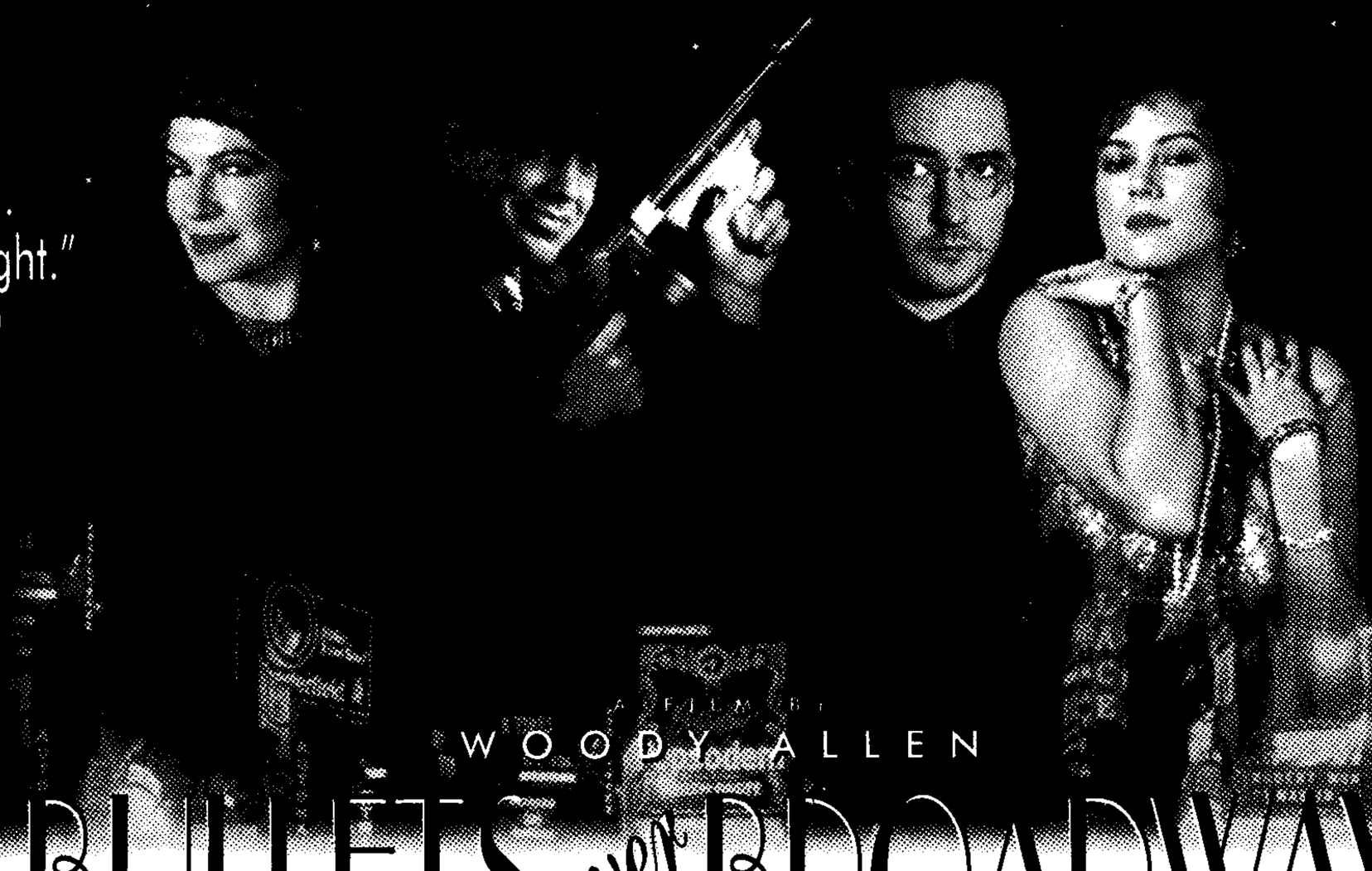

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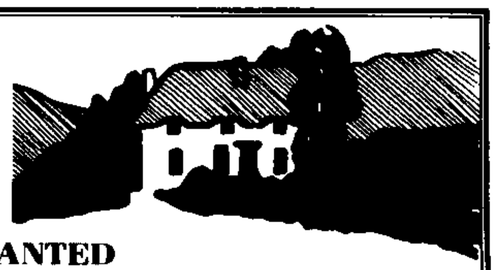

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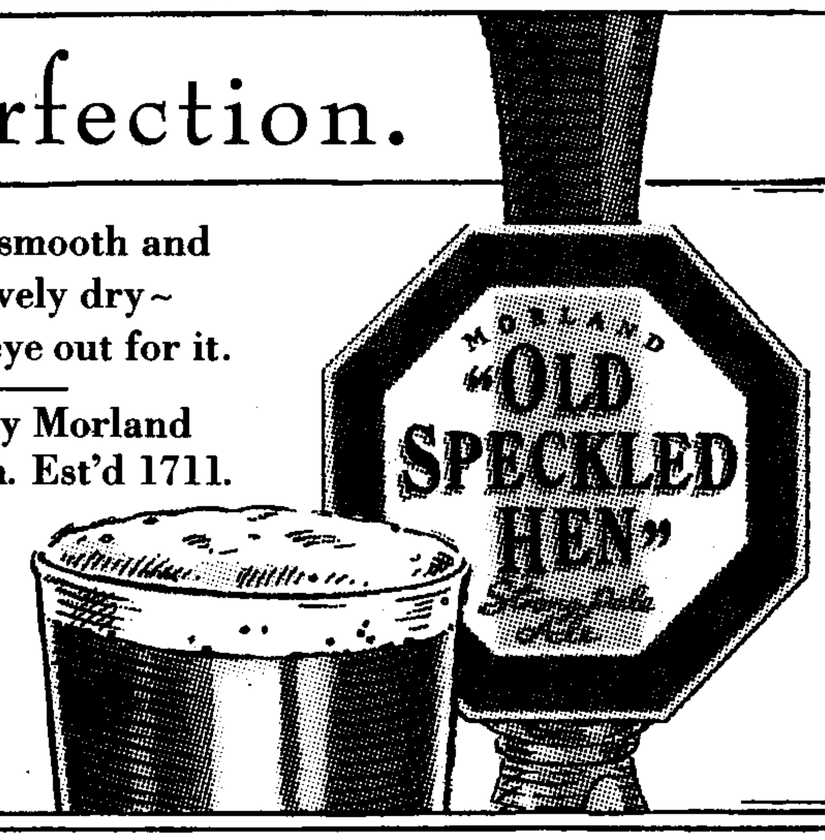

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ROSBIFETTE (35) living in Lyon misses English humour. Company sought for wining and dining. Box 1371.

HANDSOME kind man, 30, seeks sensual older woman with sophisticated personality and voluptuous figure for mutual understanding. London area. Box 1471.

MALE, SINGLE, young 43 (never really got past 25), unconventional, comfortably solvent professional with sense of humour. I enjoy life, the countryside, animals, old movies including "Breakfast at Tiffanys", most of my work, good food and good company. I don't enjoy dancing, hypocrites or fanatics and don't tolerate fools gladly. If you are female, intelligent, smiling, somewhere between 28 and 44ish (mental age of at least 13), are reasonably content with life, can tolerate smokers and have a sense of humour please write. Telephone number appreciated, photograph optional. Box 1571.

BUCKS FEMALE, early 30s, slim(ish), seeks discreet n/s male (30-40) to make her happy. Box 3771.

FIT WIDOWER 66, non-smoker, sad but not prepared to give up, seeks caring affectionate woman who likes walking, visiting gardens, places of interest and the theatre. Midlands. Box 3871.

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MAGICIAN and mystic male, intelligent, attractive, romantic, sensuous, intuitive, humorous, cultured, 30s, 5'8", seeks witch-maiden (probably 20s) for exalted passion, deep intimacy, heroic love. ALAWP. Esoteric interests essential. Box 4371.

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OXFORD BUSINESSMAN, married, seeks slim, attractive, very sexy lady, any age, for discreet red hot affair. Photo appreciated. Box 1071.

FUNNY, fascinating fifties female seeks Glos. Woody Allen. Photo please. Box 2471.

ENTREPENEUR, currently between millions and wives, seeks attractive female 30-40 to share white knuckle rides both in and out. Box 2571.

ANTARCTIC ICE-QUEENS, 26 & 29, seek hot men to melt their hearts! Humorous letters would enliven our exile from civilisation. "Pin-up" photos appreciated. Will need social rehabilitation on return. Box 2671.

MALE 49, in sterile marriage seeks n/s slim extrovert lady for life improvement. London area. Box 2771.

VERY GOOD-LOOKING male, 31, unmarried, fancies meeting attractive girl, 20-30, the Private Eye way for discreet affair, friendship, or whatever happens! Send letter, photo. Box 2871.

EROTIC LADY sought for correspondence via letter/phone by single, educated, discreet, unshockable 30s male. Meeting possible, not essential. PO Box acceptable. Box 2971.

ATTRACTIVE, intelligent, charismatic widow in New York, no children, financially secure, seeks friendship with gentlemen with old-fashioned values, of 60 years or over. Tel: 001 212 9829469.

TYNESIDE, romantic lady, warm, sensual, cultured, daytime lawyer, 40s, expensive tastes, seeks tall, silver-haired, expansive, unattached gentleman for enchanting adventures. Box 3071.

TALL, blazer-wearing chap, 30, seeks stocking-wearing fun-loving filly for days at the races and nights at the opera. Photo please. Box 3171.

ENGLISH ROSE needed for grafting onto trusty old briar stump while sap rises in spring. Healthy growth potential. London/S. Coast. Box 3271.

ATTRACTIVE international businessman seeks good-looking fun-loving female (20-35) for travelling, romantic afternoons, fun and intimate relationship. Discretion assured. Please reply with photo and phone number to Box 3469.

SHY MALE 36 seeks interesting female company. Will travel. Box 3471.

ENGLISH GENTLEMAN who lives in Spain's beautiful Balearic Islands seeks slim, very attractive brunette lady 30-40 years with no dependent children, must be well educated, with vibrant personality, love life and above all be kind and loving, someone to spend my life with. Please reply with photograph to Box 4671.

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FEMALE, FREE SPIRIT, sought by a sensitive, intuitive, and genuinely good looking male, 27, for sharing moments of magic, music and colour. Ring 0660 204451

EASYGOING, KIND, GENEROUS, exciting, professional male, 36, into exotic food, travel, music and arts, seeks affectionate girl, 21 plus, for adventure and romance. Ring 0660 204466

EARTHY, TACTILE, SOCIALIST woman, 27, vegan, seeks emotionally aware, unconventional lefty, veggie bloke for fun, friendship and maybe more. Ring 0660 204335

LONELY, BORED MAN, 30, average looking, 5ft 8in, blue eyes, dark hair, looking for an easy listening woman, to give some tlc, romance and repair broken heart. Ring 0660 204470

COMPANY DIRECTOR, 42, slim, fit, attractive, seeks intimate, romantic, relationship with intelligent, lovely, passionate lady, 30-40. Ring 0660 204375

MULTIPLE CHOICE: indifferent, a buddy or my partner. Early 40s, vegetarian female asks you to choose. Ring 0660 204425

BRIGHT, AFFECTIONATE, HAPPY, loyal and caring woman sought by similar man for summer fun. A simple message, with a simple solution, just a call away. Ring 0660 204718

LOVELY GUY, 43, honest, caring, tactile, successful, many interests, seeks slender, affectionate, fun loving lady, for serious nest building. Gsoh essential. 100% genuine. Ring 0660 204768

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IF YOU ARE 40ish, need to live, love and laugh, and are a match for a tall, slim, stylish, sensual, vivacious, long haired, leggy lady, then call Ring 0660 204437

MATURE, SUCCESSFUL, intelligent, educated, literate, athletic, slim, tall, imaginative, theatre and dance loving beast, 45, seeks, slim, intelligent, imaginative beauty, 18-35, for exploring the limits. Ring 0660 205565

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MALE LAWYER, 31, who enjoys the good things in life. Looking for a similar female to share the pleasures. Ring 0660 204984

I'M FEMALE, 32, attractive, left-wing, into good beer, good music and good times. Are you a similar male 25-40? Call me. Ring 0660 204390

MALE, 31, ATTRACTIVE, 6ft, professional, humorous, outgoing, seeks similar blonde female, 27-35, for spoiling with TLC in sparkling relationship. Ring 0660 204211

WANTED: WOMAN - DIFFERENT, unusual, slim(ish), trendy(ish), attractive, intelligent, gsoh, 20-35, into music, clubs, ideas, politics, nature, walking; by attractive man, 32, 5ft 7in, for laughs? love? Ring 0660 204134

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL, dusky female, 5ft 7in, 32, seeks attractive, tall, easygoing man, who knows what he wants, 28-38, colour unimportant. Ring 0660 204393

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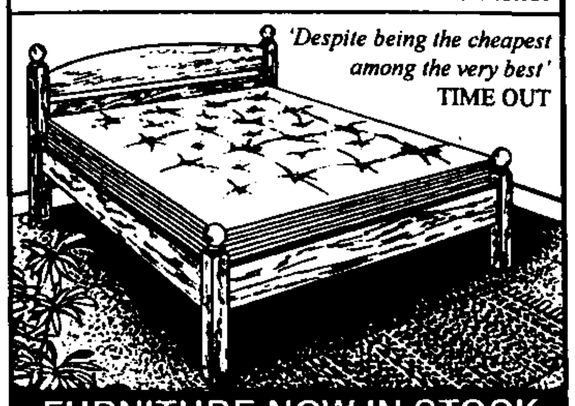

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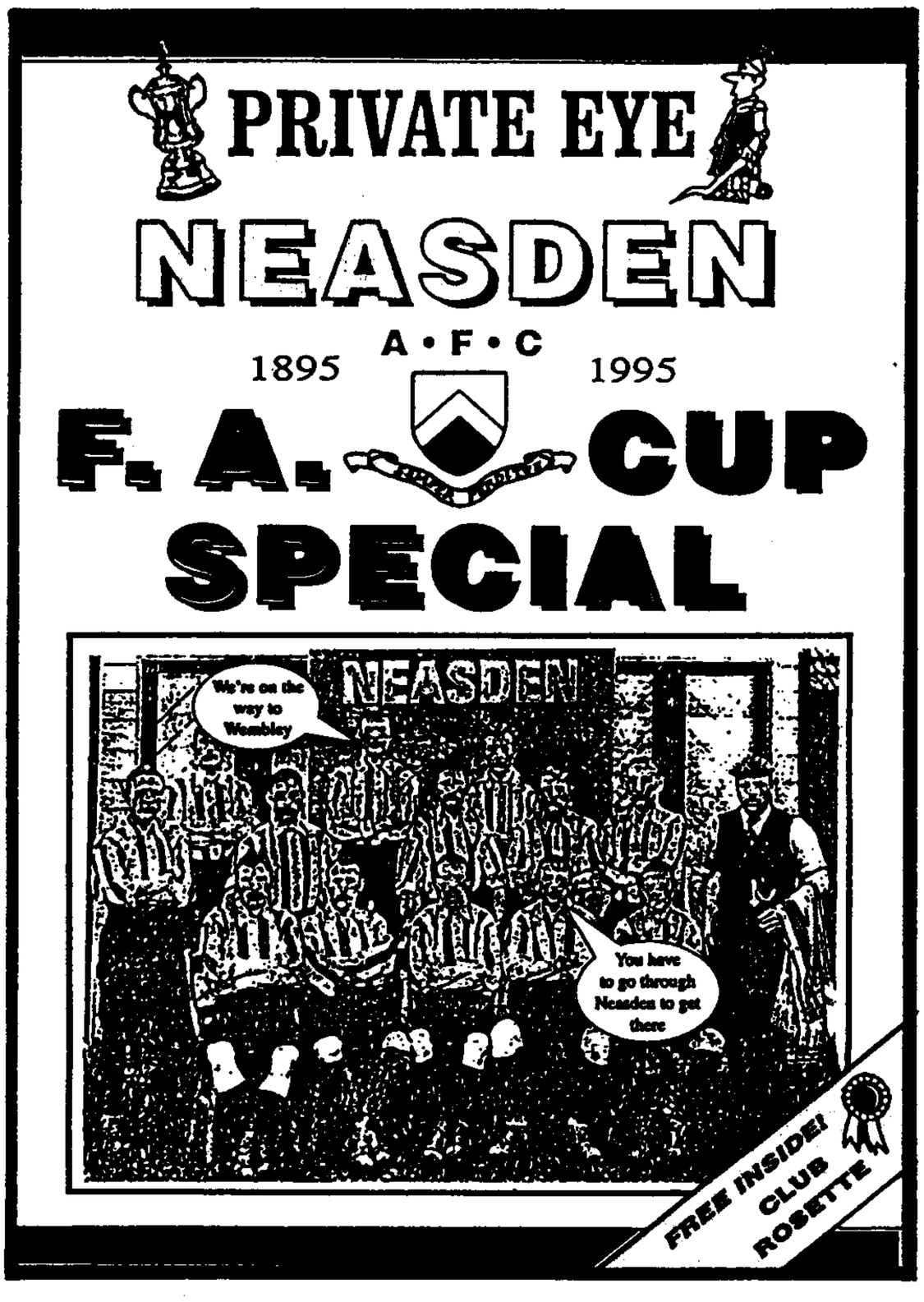

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